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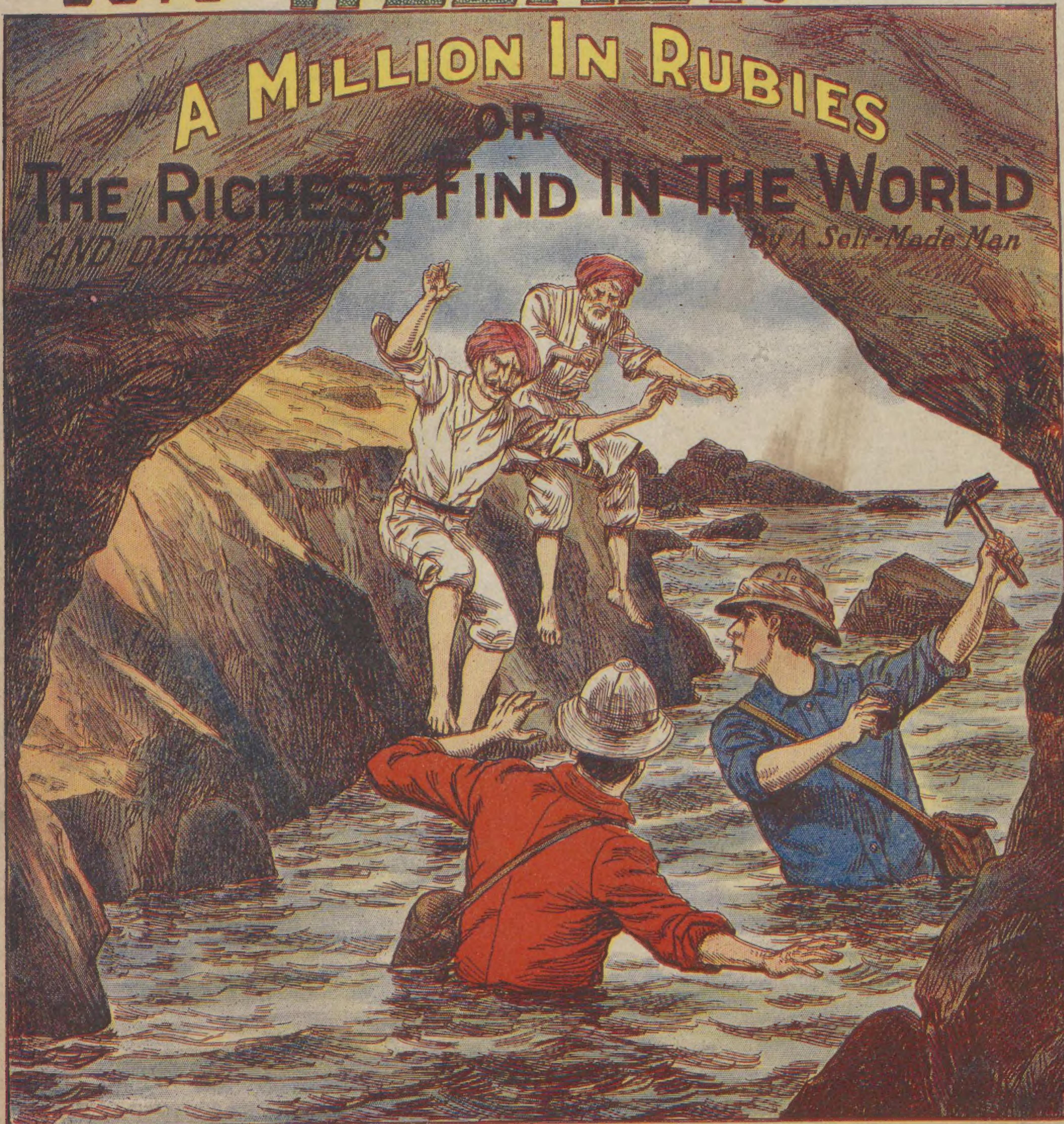
STORIES OF BOYS WEEKLY. WHO MAKE MONEY.

A MILLION IN RUBIES

OR
THE RICHEST FIND IN THE WORLD

AND OTHER STORIES

BY A SELF-MADE MAN



"This is the spot," said Jack. "A million in rubies is hidden here." As he raised his hammer to tap the rock the boys heard sounds behind them. Turning, they saw the rascally Singh Smahl and Ram Rusti on the river bank.

Fame and Fortune Weekly

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY

JNA

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A MILLION IN RUBIES

—OR—

THE RICHEST FIND IN THE WORLD

By A SELF-MADE MAN

CHAPTER I.

LOST IN A THUNDER STORM.

"Great Scott! what was that?" cried Jack Chapman, stopping short in his tracks and listening intently.

A wild, ghoulish yell, like the wail of a lost soul in torment, was borne to his ears on the wings of the wind that swept across his path.

Apparently it came from no great distance away, and was particularly terrifying under the circumstances in which the boy was placed.

The young American, who was returning to Madras, India, after a visit to a noted Hindoo idol house, some twenty miles from the coast, had accidentally become separated from his party, and was now blundering along over a trackless waste of country, that appeared to be of interminable extent.

His position would have been bad enough in the light of day, under a clear sky, but he was facing conditions that could not very well have been worse.

Night had fallen some hours since, and the darkness was impenetrable.

The usual luminous Indian sky, with its myriads of bright stars, was hidden behind a pall of clouds so dense as to be almost felt.

The rain was beating fiercely down upon the landscape.

The wind swept with considerable force across the water-soaked waste, causing the trees to bend and sway to and fro, and driving the rain before it.

The lightning, red and terrible in its intensity, lighted up the scene at intervals, making it resemble the interior of a section of the infernal regions, while the thunder boomed like salvos of artillery in battle.

With each flash of lightning Jack looked for some place of shelter from the pitiless storm, such as a native hut, or something of that kind, but not the sign of one was to be seen.

Nothing but swaying trees and rank vegetation could he make out anywhere.

The cry that startled the boy came, apparently, from a tree-covered hillock that lay off to his right.

Although wild beasts and reptiles abounded in the vicinity the cry he had heard was a distinctly human one.

The animals and crawling things had been driven into their lairs by the storm, and Jack was not likely to meet with any of them unless he stumbled right upon their hiding place.

Jack was a plucky lad and after his first start he began to wonder what had given rise to the yell of terror.

The sound was not repeated, though he stood several minutes waiting for a repetition of the cry.

Then he went on, but was forced to turn in the direction of the hillock to avoid floundering into a marsh that seemed to be of some extent.

The next flash of lightning showed him that he was following a narrow path bordered on either side by swampy red-covered ooze.

This led straight to the hillock, which proved to be much larger than it had looked from a distance.

The rising ground forming it he could not see, but a dense mass of grass and trees were visible in the glare of the lightning.

Jack pushed on till he reached the hillock.

The path led right in among the trees, which were so dense that he could make out nothing ahead even when the landscape was vividly lighted up by the electric flashes.

He saw that the only thoroughfare through it was by the narrow path.

"I wonder where all this will lead me to?" he asked himself. "Talk about tough luck, I am certainly having more than my share of it to-day. I don't know how I came to lose my party. I only stopped a moment at a hut in the jungle to get a drink of water, and when I started on again the rest of the push were out of sight. I ought to have shouted right away, but I didn't, thinking I was on the right track, and I guess I must have been walking away from them instead of after them. At any rate when I did shout I heard no response to my hail, and the result of it is I'm lost in the wilds of this miserable Indian country. If this storm hadn't come up and knocked my bearings endwise I might have managed to find my way to the high road leading to Madras. Now all I'm looking for is shelter till morning. The sun will enable me to strike out for the coast, and then I'll reach the town. Hello, here's a hut at last. Right in the midst of this clump of trees. I wonder if it's occupied? Whether it is or not I'm going in."

The next flash of lightning showed him the door standing half open.

That struck him as an indication that the hut was empty, for if anybody was there they would be sure to keep the door shut in such a storm.

Jack marched in.

It was a small hut of one room, about eighteen feet long by twelve feet wide, but it was plenty large enough to accommodate a Hindoo family.

The boy pushed the door shut to keep out the rain and then cried out:

"Hello, anybody here?"

He received no answer.

No sound struck on his ear but the roaring of the wind, and the rustling of the treetops outside.

"Nothing doing apparently," he muttered. "Glad of it. I can't talk the blame language of the country, so I couldn't make myself understood except by the universal language of signs, which don't amount to much in the darkness. If a native was here, and asked me what I wanted in his domicile, I couldn't make out what he was driving at, and so we might have a mix-up. That awful yell I heard seemed to come from this direction, but whoever uttered it does not appear to be in this—"

"Shack" he was going to say, but in place of that he exclaimed, "Good heavens!"

A flash of lightning had dimly illuminated the interior of the hut for a moment and he saw, stretched out on the floor, in a fantastic attitude, a human being.

Fantastic attitudes were not uncommon with the natives, but this person was not a native, but a man dressed in sailor garb, his face entirely concealed by a piece of cloth that went all around his neck.

Jack stared into the darkness at the spot where he had seen the motionless object.

The impression hit him at once that he was in the presence of a corpse.

"It must have been this chap's death-cry that I heard," he thought, not pleasantly impressed by the situation.

The sensation of being alone with a dead man is at all times discomfiting to most people.

Jack had as much nerve as anybody, but he wasn't eager to associate with dead people, particularly under the conditions in which he found himself on this occasion.

"I wonder if he was taken with a fit and dropped dead?" thought the boy.

Some minutes passed before another flash lighted up the inside of the hut.

This second fleeting glimpse of the motionless figure left no doubt in the lad's mind that he had a corpse to deal with.

"Oh, well, he can't hurt me if he's dead," muttered Jack, philosophically. "On the whole a dead man is a safer proposition than some live ones. All the natives aren't the pink of perfection, by any means. Some of them might consider me worth robbing, and to prevent discovery, as well as to make the deed easy, they might knock me on the head with a club or something. Dead people never do anything like that. If my friend Sam were in my shoes at this moment, he'd leave the hut to the corpse and stand outside in the rain. I'm not going to do that, although I don't think I could get much wetter if I jumped into the sea. Nevertheless, it is pleasanter to be under cover, and here I stay till daylight or longer, as it suits my purpose."

Then it occurred to Jack to get out his match-safe and throw a better light on things than the lightning did.

This he did and the first match gave him a better view of the presumed corpse.

He knelt beside the sailor and took hold of the cloth to remove it from his face.

He met with considerable resistance.

Wondering thereat, he lifted the man's head and then he saw the reason.

The cloth was tightly twisted about the sailor's face and particularly about his throat.

That the dead man had been strangled, and with considerable force, Jack made out on striking a second match.

The cloth was crossed behind the neck and drawn very tightly.

Jack had been long enough in India to understand that this was the method followed by the Thugs—a class of religious fanatics, in the special service of one of the dark divinities of the Hindoo creed.

While it was true that the practice of Thuggee had been practically stamped out by the British, nevertheless occasional instances of it came to light, proving that its believers still clung to their ancient traditions.

The dark and cheerless night of superstition, which so long clouded the moral vision of India, gave rise to institutions and practices so horrible, that, without convincing evidence, their existence would hardly be credited.

The Order of Thugs was one of the outcroppings of this condition of heathenism, and it first came to the attention of Europeans about the beginning of the last century.

Their assassinations, though carried on in secret, soon got

the English authorities after them, and they were gradually put out of business as a body.

Jack had heard scores of stories about their methods in the days when they were a power, and had been told that individual Thugs still plied their trade when they deemed it safe to do so.

Apparently this sailor was the victim of one, or perhaps two, for he was a muscular looking chap, and a single native would hardly have been able to do him up.

His pockets were turned inside out, the lining of his coat ripped open, his shirt pulled out of his trousers, and his shoes and stockings taken off.

The object of the murder was evidently plunder, and whether they had got much or not Jack could not tell.

The sailor's hat lay a yard or more away, and had been stamped upon until it was out of all shape.

Jack picked it up and looked at the lining to see if the dead man's name was written on it, either on the outside or the inside—a practice he knew from experience many sailors followed.

As he turned down the band a piece of folded parchment dropped out.

Jack unfolded it and found that the inside was covered with letters printed with a pen and strung together without any division except an occasional verticle line that seemed to have got there by accident.

Although the English alphabet had been employed in its construction there seemed to be no meaning to the writing, which resembled several long lines of letters stretched from one side of the parchment to the other, and the letters looked as if they had been put down at hap-hazard, without any purpose at all.

It struck Jack, however, that there was some object in the writing, for the parchment on which it was inscribed was not easily obtained, and writing on it was a whole lot more difficult of execution than an ordinary paper.

He believed it was some kind of cryptogram devised, as cryptograms are intended, to conceal some information not meant for the general eye.

"I'll keep this for future reference," said Jack. "I might be able to decipher it."

He was about to put it in his pocket when the soaked state of his light garments told him that was no place for it if he wanted to preserve the writing.

The parchment would, of course, resist moisture better than paper, but it would hardly be proof against the watery condition of his clothes.

The only thing he could do was to hold it in his hand, but as he wanted the use of his hands just then he pushed it into the end of a bundle of dried thatch, a material used in that country for covering the roofs of the common houses, and started to drag the corpse into a corner of the hut. While he was thus employed an unusually brilliant flash of lightning, followed instantaneously by a fearful clap of thunder that seemed to shake the very earth, caused him to pause for a moment.

Ere the lightning died away the door was pushed open and two muscular and turbanned natives appeared in the opening.

CHAPTER II.

THE TWO HINDOOS.

The newcomers uttered an exclamation on beholding Jack Chapman with the dead sailor in his arms.

The boy gave no sign, but he was certainly startled at the unexpected appearance of the two natives.

The lightning died out and darkness shrouded the interior of the hut once more.

Jack dropped the sailor and struck a match, for he did not want the villainous-looking visitors to spring upon him in the dark.

"Who are you?" he said, as the light brought them out into relief again, forgetting that he was addressing the Hindoos in a language that was probably unintelligible to them.

It happened that they were very well acquainted with English.

"Ha! English boy! What brings you here alone, sahib?" said one of them, looking sharply at Jack.

"I'm not English. I'm an American," returned the lad.

"American! Both much same. Where you come from?"

"Madras."

"Madras! Ten mile, maybe more, from here. What bring you out here?"

"Lost my way in the storm," said Jack, lighting another match.

"What you doing ten miles from Madras in this part of country?"

"I told you that I lost my way."

"Me understand that. Me want to know why you leave Madras and come out here?"

"I went with some friends to see the Temple of the Juggeraut, in Nysore village, some distance from the city. On the way back I lost my friends in the jungle and was trying to find my way back to the Madras when the storm came on. I ran across this hut, came in and found the dead sailor here. Look at that cloth. It's what a Thug uses to strangle his victim with."

"A Thug!" ejaculated the Hindoo with a start.

"Yes. You, a native of this country, ought to be thoroughly familiar with the murderous methods used by those scoundrels."

"The Thugs are not now to be found. The English have destroyed them," said the Hindoo.

"There are a few yet who work with great secrecy, I have been told."

"The young sahib has been told what is not true," said the native, with a flash of his snaky black eyes.

"I heard it from good authority. You ought to know it is true."

"I know it is not true," said the native fiercely.

Jack judged it prudent not to continue the argument, so he said:

"All right. I will not dispute your word."

"What is the young sahib's name?"

"Jack Chapman."

"You have many friends, eh, in Madras?"

"Lots of them. I am the nephew of the American consul."

The boy's reply seemed to impress the two natives.

They looked at each other, said something in their native tongue, and then both made a sort of salaam to Jack.

"What's your names?" said the lad, as the third match expired in his fingers, leaving them all in darkness again.

"My name is Singh Smahl. I am a merchant. My friend, his name is Ram Rusti. He is a dealer in pearls. We are going to Madras. We shall feel much honored by the company of the young sahib."

"I shall be glad to have you show me the way there. You were caught in the storm like myself."

"The young sahib is quite right. We knew of this hut and came here for shelter."

"The storm is passing away. I suppose you can find your way through the darkness."

"We can. But this sailor—you know him perhaps?"

There was a note of anxiety in the speaker's voice.

"No. I never saw the poor fellow before."

"The young sahib is quite sure of that?"

"Yes, I'm sure. He seems to be an American sailor, and I shall report the facts of the case at the consulate in the morning."

"You will not say he was killed by a Thug for it is not true," said Singh Smahl.

"Probably not if you are sure I am mistaken about it," said Jack, cautiously, though he intended to do it just the same, for he had had evidence, which he considered conclusive, that the sailor had met his death at the hands of those villains.

Truth to tell he was not easy in his mind concerning the identity of these two natives.

He did not believe that Singh Smahl was a merchant, and he doubted much if his companion was a dealer in pearls.

His sharp eyes had noticed that while the two men were dressed almost similar, the long cloth that most natives wore as an extra covering around their loins, was missing from Smahl, though his comrade sported his.

Something more than a mere suspicion that these natives had been at the hut previous to his arrival, and that they knew how the sailor departed this life, hovered in his mind.

It was quite possible that the cloth used to strangle the corpse belonged to Singh Smahl, and he had returned to get it.

If his suspicions were correct, then these men were secretly Thugs, and it was not beyond the bounds of reason that they might serve him as they had served the sailor.

It therefore behooved him to be on his guard while he was forced to remain in their company, though his statement that he was the nephew of the American consul at Madras might protect him, for he had not been unmindful of the

change in the attitude of the two natives after he had told them who he was.

"The young sahib is much wet. Ram Rusti would feel honored if he would drink of the cordial he carries always with him."

"I am obliged to Ram Rusti, but I guess I won't drink anything now," replied Jack, who feared lest danger lurked in the said cordial.

The rain had stopped but the wind continued to howl through the treetops.

The thunder and lightning was passing away to the north-east.

The two natives opened the door and stepped outside where they stood talking together in a low tone in their own tongue.

Jack took advantage of the chance to recover the piece of parchment from the bundle of thatch, roll it up in some of the dry stuff and thrust it into his pocket.

He also took the cloth from the sailor's head, rolled it up and placed it in his pocket to use as a piece of evidence against the Thug who had committed the murderous deed.

The sailor's identity was still a mystery, for Jack had not found any name in his hat.

In appearance he was a man of perhaps fifty years, with a rough stubby beard, thick-set, and a small ship under full sail pricked in his skin in tattoo fashion, and rendered indelible with gunpowder.

Under the ship were two initials that probably stood for his name.

Jack made a note of them.

Rolling up his sleeves he found an eagle tattooed on his right arm, in colors.

Another shower of rain coming on drove the two natives back into the hut, and they saw Jack examining the eagle with the aid of a match light.

The boy finally straightened the corpse out, placed a pebble on each eyelid, and tied his dropping jaw up with his handkerchief.

He did all this in the dark, and while he was so employed he was aware that the two natives were poking around the hut, as if looking for something.

Jack was willing to bet they were after the cloth.

The boy wondered why they had not taken it away as soon as their victim was dead, for he had heard that the Thug never leaves it behind as evidence against him or of the nature of the crime.

It struck him that the natives had neglected this important particular while robbing the corpse, and that they had been frightened away by the sounds he made in approaching the hut.

If they couldn't find it they would understand that he had it, and then there might be something doing.

He realized that they were too strong for him to cope against, and so, when he was done with the dead man, he watched his chance in the dark and glided noiselessly out of the half open door.

It had stopped raining again, and the sky gave tokens of lightening up.

The hut stood in the midst of a small clearing and Jack went around to the back, but could find no opening in the trees that surrounded it—that is, no opening large enough for him to squeeze through.

The hut was enclosed in a natural kind of stockade, the thin, wiry trees being scarcely more than six inches apart.

Their regularity could scarcely have happened by accident.

The man who built the hut probably planted the trees in such a manner that passage through them became impracticable after they grew up.

Jack believed there were more than a dozen circles formed by the trees, and the only way one could reach and leave the hut was through the narrow tortuous path he had followed when he came there.

He was pretty well acquainted with the common habitations of the Hindoos, and had never met with anything on that plan before.

He judged that the original occupant of the place had planted the stockade as a protection against the wild beasts that doubtless roamed that wild and lonesome region at night.

And yet, if that was his reason, he had taken extraordinary care to protect himself, since one row of trees would have answered the purpose just as well.

Indeed, with a stout door on the hut he would have been just as safe from the prowling denizens of the night.

While Jack was figuring this all out he heard his name called out from the front of the hut.

He recognized the voice of Singh Smahl.

The boy didn't care to respond.

He heard the natives talking volubly together, and presently their voices receded, and he knew they had gone forward through the path to the outside of the hillock.

As he returned toward the front he stepped on something hard.

He found it was a stout cudgel.

It was an excellent weapon at close quarters, and the boy was glad to get hold of it.

Re-entering the hut and striking one of his last matches, he saw, standing in a corner, a bar of wood which looked as if it was intended as a brace for the door.

Examining the sides of the doorway he saw two sockets clearly put there to hold the bar of wood.

Shutting the door he put the bar in place, and then felt secure against any further invasion on the part of the two natives, if they came back.

He forgot, however, that in barring them out he was making a prisoner of himself.

He no longer felt a repugnant feeling toward the dead man.

Had there been a pallet of any kind he would have laid down and gone to sleep.

As it was he began to feel drowsy as time passed, and sitting down in a corner a few feet from the corpse, he rested his back against the wall of dried mud and ere long dozed off the sleep.

CHAPTER III.

JACK PUTS IT OVER THE TWO HINDOOS.

How long he slept Jack had no idea, but he was awakened by a pounding on the door.

"Those two rascals have come back," he thought. "Well, let them pound. They are not going to get in here. If they want to stay out there till daylight they are welcome to do so. Then with my club in my hand I guess I'll be able to stand them off if they try to get gay with me. I've got their names, and I think it is likely the authorities will question them regarding the sailor's death."

"Sahib! Sahib! Open the door and let us in," cried the voice of Singh Smahl.

Jack, however, was conveniently deaf at that moment, so they desisted.

He got up and went to the door.

Through a slight crack he heard them consulting outside.

"It's too bad I don't understand Hindooostanese or I might get on to what they are saying, and then I could figure on their intentions toward me."

Some more pounding followed, and this time Singh Smahl resorted to threats of what would happen to Jack if he did not open the door.

"They are dropping their friendly attitude now and showing their real colors," thought the boy. "I'm glad of that for now I can deal with them without ceremony."

Threats having no effect the natives flung themselves against the door in an effort to burst it in, but they might have saved themselves the trouble, for the door was a strong one, and the bar held it as solid as a rock.

They gave it up and Jack heard nothing from them for half an hour.

Then he heard a scratching sound at the rear, that ran slowly up the side of the hut, and presently he heard a ripping sound at the edge of the roof.

"One of them has got up there, and he's cutting and tearing away the thatch so as to make a hole to enter by," thought Jack. "Well, let him. I'll give him the surprise of his life when he tries to get in," and the boy gripped his cudgel tighter in his hand.

The noise continued for awhile, and Jack heard a shower of dry and wet thatch dropping into the hut.

"The young sahib had better open the door or he will keep company with the sailor," said Singh Smahl, ominously.

Jack made no reply to that and presently the sounds were resumed.

By this time the sky had cleared considerably and there was light enough outside for Jack to see the movements of Smahl's arm as it worked away.

The interior of the hut was too dark for the Hindoo to make out the boy.

But for the door being so tightly closed he would have believed that Jack was not there.

He and Ram Rusti had searched the neighborhood pretty thoroughly in the short time they had been absent, which they were able to do owing to their familiarity with the country round about, and knowing the boy could only make his escape in certain contracted directions, because of the marshy ground, they were satisfied he was still somewhere on the hillock.

That was why they returned there, and when they found the door barred against them they knew he must be in the hut.

The cause of their anxiety to get hold of him was two-fold.

The disappearance of Singh Smahl's loin cloth convinced them that the boy had taken possession of it as evidence that the sailor had been killed by a Thug.

Secondly, they had murdered the sailor to gain possession of the parchment that Jack found in the lining of his hat, and their hasty search before the boy's arrival, and their second search after Jack left the hut, failed to bring it to light.

As they knew the sailor had had it they now suspected that the boy had found it while handling the dead man, and had it in his possession.

The information the parchment contained was of great value to them.

They did not know, however, how clever the sailor had been in reducing the information to a peculiar cryptogram, the key to which he alone knew.

Had they found it they would have been thoroughly baffled. They could not have read it to save their lives.

And yet it was one of the simplest of cryptograms, though mystifying enough in its way.

It could not possibly be read until its key was found, and then it became as simple a piece of work as rolling off a log.

Believing that it was written in plain English, they figured that if the boy had found it he had made himself familiar with it right away.

His sudden disappearance from the hut, after saying he would be glad of their aid to show him the way to Madras, pretty well convinced them that he had found and read the parchment, and intended to make use of the information it contained.

That fact, in connection with the cloth, made them determined to get hold of him, and treat him as they had treated the sailor.

Then they intended to sink both bodies in a hole in the marsh.

Singh Smahl worked with vigor and made a hole large enough to drop through, while his companion kept watch on the door, ready to nab the boy if he started to escape that way.

Pulling himself up, Smahl stuck his head through the hole to reconnoiter the interior before he got in.

Jack was screwed into the opposite corner, and the color of the wall agreed so well with his garments in the darkness that Singh Smahl couldn't distinguish him.

"Sahib, are you going to open the door?" he said.

He got no answer.

He thought it was very strange that the lad kept so quiet, and he began to wonder if the boy was asleep and had failed to hear all of the racket.

He would soon find out all about it, he grimly said to himself.

He crawled higher, stuck his legs through the hole and let himself slowly down.

His deliberation proved his undoing, for it gave Jack all the chance he wanted to get in the proper position to meet him while his back was turned.

His feet had barely touched the floor when—biff!

The cudgel caught him on the side of the head and he dropped over badly stunned.

Jack then decided to get the other bird, too.

He judged that Ram Rusti was looking to see the door opened by his companion, so he could step in.

Jack softly took the piece of wood out of the socket and opened the door half way.

Ram Rusti was so eager to take a hand in the proceedings that he fell right into the trap.

He glided into the hut and was met with a whack on the head that put him right to sleep.

Jack took his loin cloth off, tore it into two strips and with the strips he bound the arms of the two natives to their sides.

That rendered them helpless for further mischief.

Looking out the plucky boy saw that the sky was almost clear and the stars out in all their customary glory.

Their glow lighted up the country far and near, and made objects at some distance visible.

"Singh Smahl said that Madras was not much over ten miles from here," thought Jack. "I'm sorry I didn't ask him to point out the direction. Never mind, I'll make a try for it right away. I am sure the high road is somewhere yonder. If I can strike it the rest will be easy."

With his cudgel in his hand Jack left the hut and retraced his steps to the outer edge of the hillock.

He walked around the solid ground that was like an island in the midst of that part of the marsh, seeking for an outlet other than the one by which he had come there.

He found there were none, which made him wonder all the more at the precautions adopted by the builder of the hut.

It was impossible for any wild animal to reach the hillock except by way of the path the boy had followed to get there himself.

The only way to get out of his predicament was to retrace his steps till he could find another path that would take him across the marsh.

Bewildered by the thunder storm and the dense darkness he had probably missed more than one path.

Now that conditions were favorable he hoped to be more successful.

And he was.

He hit a path that carried him along the edge of the marsh for a hundred yards or so when he struck a continuation of it that led through a thicket.

Here he went cautiously lest he encounter some animal out in search of a supper.

He met nothing of the kind, not even a stray hyena, and so he went on his way till he found himself in a cultivated district, with a hut here and there.

He found divergent paths running in different directions, but nothing that could by any stretch of the imagination be twisted into a road.

He took a path at random and pressed onward, cheered by the reflection that it seemed to be running in the direction that he believed led to the coast.

A deep silence reigned along his route.

The howling wind had subsided to a faint breeze, too light to rustle the trees.

It seemed marvellous that such a tremendous storm could have vanished utterly in a few hours and left not a trace behind.

The air had grown warm again, and Jack's soaked garments were fairly dry.

"What time of night it was he hadn't the least idea.

At last Jack came out on the road he had been aiming to reach.

The way to Madras was straight before him, and he reckoned that all his troubles were over for that night.

But that was where he was mistaken.

CHAPTER IV.

WHAT JACK ENCOUNTERED AT THE HINDOO INN.

As he trudged along he came to a large wooden structure of two stories which he recognized as a roadside inn, the proprietor of which was a Hindoo who catered to tourists and other white foreigners.

It had a good bar, and enjoyed quite a reputation among Englishmen particularly who passed along the road, to and from Madras.

It was nine miles from the city, and in the States would have been called a road-house.

Jack and his party had stopped there on their way to the Temple of the Juggernaut that morning, or rather the previous morning, for it was already some time after midnight, or to be more exact it was on the stroke of three.

The proprietor, whose name was Charak, had waited on them personally, serving them with drinks and other refreshments, and Jack thought he had never seen a more rascally looking fellow.

He mentioned his opinion to Captain Trewlawney, the head of the party, but that gentleman only laughed, and said that Jack mustn't always judge people by their looks.

"I know just where I am now," thought Jack, as he came abreast of the inn. "It will take me about two hours to reach the city. I guess I'll sit down on the veranda and rest myself for the last lap on my journey."

Jack stretched himself out on a stationary bench and proceeded to take things easy.

He had not been in that position many minutes when he was startled by the loud shriek of a female on the floor above.

"Great Scott! There's a woman in trouble," he cried, springing on his feet.

A second and third scream smote upon the early morning air.

Jack ran into the middle of the road and looked up.

All he could see were several open windows, through one of which the screams continued to issued.

"I must see what this means," he said. "As the lower part of the house is closed I'll shin up one of the supports and get into the house through a window."

He lost no time in mounting the nearest post.

To enter the window before him was the work of a moment. The cries had ceased and silence reigned around him.

This surprised him, for he reasoned that such cries as he had heard ought to have awakened every one in the house, and brought the proprietor and some of his people on the spot.

As he stood undecided what to do, a door suddenly opened close at hand and a man, whom he recognized by his side face as Charak, the proprietor, came out, with a small native oil lamp in one hand, while the other grasped a man's traveling bag.

He appeared to be in a great hurry, and he did not notice the presence of the boy, who stood back in the shadows of the corridor.

He glided down the corridor, like the villain in an old-time melodrama, opened a door and vanished.

"Now I wonder what does that mean?" Jack asked himself. "What is the proprietor of this house doing up and dressed at this hour? It strikes me he's been up to some kind of mischief. I must investigate."

Jack opened the door through which Charak had made his exit and poked his head in.

The room was not exactly dark, for the open window admitted the light of the stars, but still most of the apartment was in shadow.

A door opposite, communicating with the room, stood wide open and the boy was crossing toward it when he saw a female form in white stretched on the floor near a bed couch, and another figure in pajamas lying on the bed and partly on the floor.

"There's been a crime committed here, and that rascally proprietor is at the bottom of it," thought Jack.

He fumbled in his pocket for his match-safe and found a solitary lucifer in it which he lighted.

By the flame of the match he saw a pretty girl of perhaps fifteen, in a night robe, unconscious on the floor, and an elderly man, with a stab wound in the breast, partly on the bed.

At first sight he appeared to be dead.

Jack lighted a lamp that stood on the table with the match before it went out.

He then raised the girl and laid her on the bed, after which he turned his attention to the man, who was a gentleman and apparently a traveler.

Jack jumped at the conclusion that the girl was his daughter.

He tore open the man's upper garment and saw that he was bleeding steadily from his wound, which was near the shoulder.

Jack possessed no knowledge of surgery, but he had an idea that the wound was not in a place to cause immediate death.

He soon ascertained that the gentleman's heart was beating, which showed that he was still alive.

He picked up a towel and bound it tightly across the man's chest, after wetting the part that went over the wound.

This first aid to the injured was hardly very effective, but it was better than nothing, and Jack hoped it would arrest the flow of blood somewhat.

On an odd kind of dressing-case lay a small flat bottle labeled cognac.

Jack uncorked it and poured some of the contents down the gentleman's throat.

It produced the desired effect—bringing the man to consciousness.

He stared up in the boy's face.

"How did this happen, sir?" Jack asked.

The gentleman answered with some difficulty.

"The villain—came—to rob me. I awoke—and caught—

him—in the act of—taking—my bag. I seized him—by the arm. He turned—and stabbed—me. That is—all—I remember,” he said, slowly.

“The young lady is your daughter?” said Jack.

“Yes. She is—asleep—in the next room. Call her for—I feel faint. I fear—I’m going—to die.”

“I hope not, sir. Take another drink of this brandy.”

The boy held the bottle to his lips and he swallowed a little of the contents.

“What is your name?” Jack asked.

“Edward Dawson.”

“You are English?”

“No—American.”

“You were going to Madras?”

“Yes.”

“You could identify the man who stabbed and robbed you?”

“I can. It was—the proprietor.”

“I thought so. I saw him come out of this room a few minutes ago.”

“You are an English boy?”

“No, American like yourself. My uncle is resident consul at Madras. My name is Jack Chapman.”

“And you—were stopping here and heard——”

“No. I was passing the house and heard a scream——”

“A scream!”

“Yes. It was your daughter.”

“My daughter!”

“Yes. I found her senseless here on the floor almost beside you. She is now lying on the bed where I put her.”

“My poor child! She must have been—awakened by the noise. She found me stabbed and thinking—me dead screamed and—fainted. I feel faint again. More of that brandy. It braces me up. I fear—I shall die—without the services—of a doctor, and Madras—is a long distance away.”

“I have bound up your wound as well as I could. I do not think it is mortal, or you would not be able to converse so well with me. You have bled considerable outwardly, which is better than bleeding internally I have been told. It is quite natural you should be faint and weak under the circumstances even if your wound is not a dangerous one. You had better lie on the bed beside your daughter.”

At that moment the girl moved and showed other signs of coming to.

Jack got some water and sprinkled it plentifully on her face.

She sprang half up with a cry.

“Oh!” she ejaculated, on seeing the boy bending over her. “Do not kill me—have mercy!” she cried, in a terrified tone.

“Calm yourself, Miss Dawson; you are in no danger,” said Jack, soothingly.

“Ah! Who are you? My poor father! He has been murdered!” she cried, hysterically.

“Your father is not dead. He may be badly wounded, but I guess there is hope for him. I have been talking to him.”

“Where, oh where is he?” she cried anxiously.

“Sitting on the floor with his head against the bed. Help me place him on the bed, and he will be more comfortable.”

Miss Dawson got off the bed and helped Jack raise her father on to it.

“Dear, dear father, are you badly hurt?” she said eagerly to him.

“I don’t know, my dear. Maybe not; but I feel very weak. This young man has done what he could for me. I think the bleeding has stopped. The wound is here.”

“I don’t think you are dangerously hurt, sir. Your lung was not pierced or you would be spitting blood, and your heart is well below the cut. Looks to me as if the knife cut into the muscles of your chest between two upper ribs. A surgeon would fix you up all right. Take another sip of the brandy,” said Jack.

The gentleman did not answer, but closed his eyes and remained quiet.

The girl wet a towel and bathed her father’s face with it, while she gazed at him tenderly and tearfully.

Jack went to the door and opening it to look out found himself face to face with the crouching and listening form of Charak, the innkeeper.

CHAPTER V.

IN THE FRYING PAN AND OUT.

The rascal started back as if stung by some venomous reptile and glared at the boy.

“What are you doing here, sahib?” he hissed. “You no belong here.”

“What are you doing outside this door, spying upon what is going on inside?”

“It is a big lie! I am no spy. I am the owner of this house. I heard some one cry out. It awakened me, so I came to see what was wrong.”

“Oh, you did, eh? You were a long time getting here for I heard the cry myself half an hour ago, and climbed up here to find out what was wrong.”

“You climbed up? Where you come from at this hour?”

“That needn’t worry you. I was in the road outside when I heard the scream of a girl, repeated several times. I came up and found an American gentleman, who put up here for the night with his daughter, stabbed in the breast. I suppose you don’t know anything about it?”

“Me! How I shall know? I now came to the door.”

“Then why didn’t you walk in like a man, instead of crouching outside like a spy.”

The innkeeper uttered an imprecation, or something that sounded like one, in the Hindoo dialect.

“I find you coming from that room, sahib, where you no right have to be. There is blood on your fingers—on your clothes. You a thief in the night shall answer for what has happened.”

With that he put his finger to his mouth and sent a peculiar shrill whistle down the corridor.

Jack was rather staggered by the stand taken by the rascal.

It was clear he was bent on throwing the guilt of the affair on him.

That, however, wouldn’t work, since the wounded man had recognized his assailant.

Charak either didn’t know that, or intended to bluff the matter out.

The boy sprang at the innkeeper and seized him.

“You scoundrel!” he cried. “You are a thief in the night yourself, and almost a murderer as well. I saw you come out of this room with a traveling bag in your hand belonging to the gentleman you struck down. You will have to answer for the crime. Ha, would you!”

Charak had whipped out a knife and made a quick lunge with it at the boy, but Jack was on his guard, and too quick for him.

He grabbed the Hindoo’s wrist, gave it a quick wrench and the glittering blade fell ringing on the floor.

Jack picked it up as several Hindoo servants came running to Charak’s aid.

The boy regretted that he had left his cudgel outside beside the bench.

He didn’t like the idea of using a knife on anybody.

Charak said something to his assistants in a fierce tone.

Each of the four pulled out his knife and the bunch started for Jack.

The boy was no coward, but he saw he hadn’t the ghost of a show against so many, so he resorted to a flank move.

He dived out of the window on the roof of the veranda, slid to the nearest post and reached the ground in a twinkling.

He got possession of his club and ran into the road.

The Hindoos came swarming after him.

He knew they were good runners, and were sure to catch him in the open.

He picked up a large stone and let it drive at the foremost one, bowling him over like a nine-pin, and putting him out of business for the time being.

Charak stood on the roof of the veranda urging his servants on.

Jack made a bluff of starting down the road, then darted off toward the side of the inn where he saw a low outhouse.

A short ladder was leaning against it.

The boy mounted to the roof by it and then pulled it up after him.

A minute later the three Hindoos had him surrounded.

When they saw they couldn’t reach him they began hunting for stones, of which there were plenty in the vicinity, and he was presently dodging their fusillade.

Fortunately they were very bad throwers.

Not one stone in a dozen hit him, and the blows did not hurt him greatly.

At that juncture down the road came a detachment of British dragoons, bound for Madras.

The hoof beats and clanking sword scabbards attracted Jack’s notice.

As soon as they were close to the inn he began shouting for help.

The major in command halted his men to find out what

was the matter, and the three Hindoos disappeared like magic.

Jack sprang to the ground and rushed out into the road.

"What's the trouble, young man?" asked the officer.

Jack introduced himself, said he was the nephew of the American consul at Madras, and explained that he had been set upon by the Hindoos at the command of the proprietor of the inn.

He hurriedly explained how Charak, the owner of the house, had treated his guest, Mr. Dawson, and asked if there was a surgeon with the party to attend to him.

"Yess," said the officer. "Dr. Hawkins, follow this young man."

He ordered half a dozen of the troopers to dismount and force the door.

This was done in short order, and the party, led by Jack, proceeded upstairs to the room occupied by the wounded man and his daughter.

Jack went in accompanied by the surgeon.

They found Mr. Dawson as Jack left him.

The doctor removed the bandage the boy had tied around the gentleman's body, but had some trouble separating it from the wound.

The bleeding which had stopped and coagulated began afresh.

The surgeon pronounced the wound a severe but not necessarily dangerous one.

He got to work with his bag of lint, liniment, medicines and other articles, and soon fixed Mr. Dawson up in ship-shape way.

He mixed some medicine for him to take, placed a trooper on guard at the door and reported to the major.

In the meanwhile four of the six troopers made a search through the building for the proprietor, but he was not to be found.

Several Hindoo women were routed out of their beds, and questioned.

They declared they knew nothing about anything.

Not a man was found on the premises.

The major finally detailed a guard of half a dozen troopers in charge of a subaltern to remain at the inn till further orders, and then he and his troop kept on their way to Madras, taking Jack with them.

The young American rode behind one of the sergeants at the head of the party immediately behind the major and the surgeon.

Day broke with its customary splendor in that part of the world before they reached their destination.

The troop passed within three blocks of the American consulate, on the upper floor of which Jack's uncle and family lived, and the sergeant was directed to take the boy there after first taking him before the police to tell his story about the outrage at the inn.

Jack was detained half an hour at the headquarters of the police, and would have been held much longer but for his connection with the consulate.

He was finally dismissed with orders to hold himself subject to a call at any time he was wanted.

None of the members of his uncle's household were stirring when he let himself upstairs with his night key.

He had been expected back the previous evening, for the trip to and from the village of Nysore, where the Temple of the Juggernaut was situated, could easily be made on horseback within twelve hours, which included a stay of three to four hours at the village.

The slowest part of the journey was the passage of the jungle, and though the distance through it was not great progress was always slow.

Jack made a complete change of apparel, and lay down on the bed to catch a few winks until called to breakfast between nine and ten o'clock.

In spite of the excitement through which he had passed during the night he was soon sound asleep.

When the family assembled for breakfast, Mr. Chapman, taking it for granted that his nephew had come in some time after all hands had gone to bed, sent a servant to his room to call him.

The Hindoo found Jack sound as a bell and fully dressed.

Fully dressed didn't mean that he had a superabundance of clothes on, since in that warm climate nobody wore more than was absolutely necessary to his station in society.

The servant supposed Jack had got up as usual and then fallen asleep again, so he shook him into wakefulness.

"When did you get home, Jack?" asked his uncle, when the boy took his seat at the table.

"About six this morning," replied Jack.

"About six this morning?" repeated his uncle. "I think that requires an explanation. Where were you all night? Not at the house of a friend, for surely he wouldn't turn you out at that early hour?"

"It's a long story, Uncle Ed, as well as an exciting one, and had better be postponed until after breakfast. I passed through more exciting adventures since I left here yesterday morning than I've met with in all my previous life."

Jack was about to ask if any of the party he'd been with had called to see if he had found his way home on his own hook, but changed his mind, for had one of them, his friend Joe Scudder, for instance, turned up and told his people that he had been separated from the party in the jungle, they would have been extremely anxious concerning him, and would have given him a different greeting.

He was satisfied that as soon as he was missed the party had turned back to look for him, and had, of course, been driven to seek shelter when the storm came up.

Doubtless they were still looking for him, with the assistance of natives who knew the country like a book.

He judged that some of the party would come on to the inn to see if he had extricated himself and come on there, when they would learn enough from the troopers to assure them he was all right.

"So you met with a lot of adventures, eh?" smiled his uncle, little dreaming of the strenuous nature of those adventures.

"Yes, sir. I think they were unusual and stirring enough to go in a book."

"Well, we shall be glad to hear about them after you are through eating."

"Dear me, can't you talk and eat at the same time?" said his pretty cousin, Daisy Chapman. "I'm just dying to hear about what you have been through."

"No, I'm hungry. I haven't had anything to eat since we had dinner at the inn at Nysore."

"You haven't?" cried his cousin, while his uncle and aunt looked surprised. "How is that?"

"Well, you see I became separated from the rest of the party and got lost in the jungle."

"You didn't!" cried Daisy, staring at him.

"I surely did, and I didn't get out of the labyrinth until dark. Then when I thought things were coming out all right I was caught in that big thunder storm and drenched to the bone. I got all mixed up in my bearings and blundered into a region of swamps that seemed worse than the jungle, and there I met with my first thriller," said Jack.

"Your first thriller! What do you mean?" asked Daisy.

"Well, it was bad enough to flounder through a jungle for three or four hours, with every chance of meeting with a tiger, or some other wild animal to whom you would look like a square meal, and it's about as bad trying to make headway in an unknown locality in a thunder storm that could give points to anything of the kind I ever saw in the States; but when in the midst of the worst of the storm you hear the dying yell of a fellow creature coming out of the darkness, and a few minutes afterward you come suddenly upon the still warm corpse, strangled by Thugs, in a small hut where you have taken shelter, and later you encounter the Thugs themselves, and have a run in with them, barely escaping with your life, is some thriller, believe me!"

"Do you mean to say all this happened to you last night?" said his uncle, looking hard at him.

"Yes, I do, and more, too, on top of it."

"Oh, Jack, do tell us all about it," cried Daisy, eagerly.

"I'm going to, but do have a few moments' patience. I promise you I'll have your eyes sticking out of your head before I have finished."

"Oh, my, you've got me so excited I can't eat," she said.

"Don't be foolish. I've been through enough in a few hours to turn the hair of a bald-headed man white, but the recollection isn't impairing my appetite."

"Why, a bald-headed man hasn't any hair to turn white, you ridiculous boy," said Daisy.

Jack made no reply but went on eating.

"Jack," said Daisy, after a pause.

"Well, what's troubling you now?"

"There aren't any more Thugs."

"I've heard different, and after what I went through last night in the hut in the marsh, I know different."

"How do you know the men you say you met were Thugs?" said his uncle.

"Because I saw the evidence of their handiwork. The corpse I found in the hut had been strangled with a loin

cloth, twisted tightly about his neck. No hangman's noose ever did the job more effectually. I brought the cloth back with me, and it's in the hands of the police now with my evidence against the two men whose names are Singh Smahl and Ram Rusti," said Jack.

"Was the murdered man a Hindoo?"

"No, he was a sailor, an American, for he had an eagle tattooed on his right arm, and in its beak it held an American flag. I think you ought to look into the matter in connection with the police, and have the poor fellow suitably buried."

"Where is the hut where the corpse is?"

"On a hillock, concealed by trees, on the edge of a marsh three or four miles west of the inn on the Madras road."

Jack then finished his breakfast and began his story from the point where he lost the party in the jungle.

As he proceeded his uncle, aunt and cousin listened with great interest.

His experience both in the jungle and on the trackless country during the thunder storm was thrilling enough in itself, but when he told about the efforts of the two Thugs to get at him in the hut, after he had given them the slip, he had his audience wound up.

"By George, that was clever!" ejaculated his uncle, when he told how he knocked the two rascals out and made prisoners of them. "The police will find them there and bring them to town. It will be hard, however, to prove they killed the sailor. You couldn't swear that they did."

"If the loin cloth can be shown to be Singh Smahl's property—"

"He'll deny that it belongs to him."

"I can swear that he threatened to serve me the same as the sailor."

"Go on with your story."

Jack then related his adventure at the inn.

"Upon my word, young man, you had the time of your life last night," admitted his uncle.

"You're a regular hero," said Daisy, enthusiastically.

"Sure. I'm going to write a book about myself one of these days," laughed Jack.

At that moment Mr. Chapman was summoned to attend a visitor in his office.

Hardly had he gone downstairs when a horse galloped up to the door, a boy of Jack's age dismounted and ran upstairs.

This was his particular friend, Joe Scudder.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CRYPTOGRAM.

"Hello, Joe," said Jack, "I'm back all right."

"I see you are, and we've just got back after finding out from a trooper at the inn that you had been there, got into some trouble with the proprietor, who has disappeared with his male servants, and then started for home. How in thunder did you get lost in the jungle? We didn't miss you till we found your horse coming after us without you. A halt was called and we waited for awhile for you to show up on foot, for we supposed you had fallen off your horse in some way—brushed off by the extended bow of a tree. As we didn't meet with a single wild animal going and coming, we did not think you had encountered one. We would have heard you cry out if you had. When you failed to show up, we started back to look for you, spreading out and shouting, so that if you were anywhere within a quarter of a mile you must have heard us. We went all the way back to the jungle village. There we stopped and sent a dozen natives out hunting for you. We stayed there all through the storm, during which the natives came in one by one and reported no signs of you. Captain Trelawney was much worried over you, and he said you had to be found before we returned to the city. After the storm we all started out again with the natives. Doctor Maxwell finally started ahead for the inn to see if by any chance you had extricated yourself and gone there. He found you had and hurried back to let us know. That was mighty good news to us. The natives were dismissed and we all rode to the inn, which we found in possession of the troopers, on account of the stabbing of an American gentleman named Dawson, who had taken rooms there with his daughter for the night, and had been attacked and robbed by the landlord. We learned that you came on the scene about the time of the crime, had done what you could for Mr. Dawson, and had got into trouble with the people of the inn afterward. You stopped the troopers as they were passing the house, told the story of the trouble, which caused the placing of the guard, and then accompanied the

detachment to the city," rattled off Joe. "Now give an account of yourself."

"Well, come in and see Daisy and pay your respects to her and my aunt, after which we will adjourn to my room and I'll tell you my story, which is going to interest you or I'm much mistaken," said Jack.

Joe was glad to run into the breakfast room and see Jack's cousin, for he was rather sweet on the young lady, a sentiment returned by Miss Daisy herself, for Joe was one of the few Americans she knew in Madras, and she preferred her countrymen to Englishmen, though she was not at all backward in flirting most outrageously with the young Britons she met in society.

Ten minutes later Jack and Joe were closeted together in the former's room.

"Heave ahead, old man. I'd like to hear what sort of time you had trying to get out of the jungle. It's as bad as a Western corral," said Joe.

"Oh, there isn't much to tell about that," said Jack. "It took me three or four hours of blundering before I came out into the open country."

"And you didn't meet with a single wild beast?"

"Not the suspicion of one, I'm thankful to say."

"Tigers are known to have their lairs in it. Only last week a Hindoo young one was taken right out of the village in broad daylight by a tiger, carried into the jungle and that was the last of it."

"Yes, I heard the story. My real troubles didn't seem to begin until after I got out of the jungle and got caught in the thunder storm."

"Where were you when that came on?"

"In a wild kind of a waste with not a house in sight."

"A cheerful position under the circumstances."

"I should say. You people saw how lowering the sky looked, you heard the thunder and saw the lightning, and you know how it poured down. I was out in all that."

"Gee!" ejaculated Joe.

"Apparently I was all alone there, with my further progress stopped by a marsh, when suddenly I heard—"

"What did you hear?" said Joe, as Jack paused to give effect to his story.

"A wild, unearthly yell," said Jack, solemnly.

"Some wild beast," said Joe.

"Not at all. It was the last cry of an American sailor."

"What's that? How did you know it was?"

Jack went on with his story, bringing it up to the time he entered the hut.

"At that moment there came a flash of lightning, and what do you suppose I saw on the floor?" he said, impressively.

"I don't know," said Joe.

"A corpse!"

"Holy mackerel! You don't mean it."

Jack proceeded till he came to the unexpected appearance of the two Hindoos.

He described their coming with dramatic intensity.

"Great Scott! Wasn't you scared?" said Joe.

"The hero of a story is never scared of anything," grinned Jack, who then continued his narrative up to the point where he was awakened in the hut by the return of the Hindoos.

"You didn't let them in, did you?" said Joe.

"I should say not."

"What did they do?"

Jack told him what Singh Smahl did, and how he knocked both the rascals out.

"You're a corker," said Joe, admiringly.

"Sure I am," said Jack, proceeding to explain how he left the hut and went on his way till he reached the inn.

Then he told all that happened there.

"Gosh! Your picture ought to be inserted, with your story, in the town newspapers, then the people hereabouts will learn what a real American can do when he's up against things generally. I wonder where that innkeeper skipped off to?"

"Search me, but the police will get him, I guess."

"They'll get the two Hindoo Thugs when they go to the hut."

"They're bound to, and they'll fetch them to town with the sailor's body. My uncle will see that the poor fellow is buried all right, and he will try and find out his identity. Probably he belonged to one of the ships in this port."

"What about that piece of parchment you got out of his hat?"

"I forgot to take it out of the trousers I wore on the trip. I'll get it and we'll see what we can make out of it."

Jack picked up the pants he had discarded on returning home and pulled the bunch of dry thatch out of the pocket.

From the middle of this he extracted the piece of parchment.

Unfolding it he let Joe look at the collection of letters printed on it with some care.

This was what both saw:

Lqiugn, sqku, dc, sdqhi vYviuuc, bYauh, hdjix, dv
Bqtgqh, ixguu, bYauh, tju, uqli, vgdb, gqceddg, kYaaqwu
Adl, iYtu, hxdlh, ixgum, sgdhuh, dc, gds&, q, ucigqcsu, hdjix
Yc, sgukYsu, ruxYct, gds&, Yh, xYttuc, q, bYaaYdc, Yc, gjrYuh

"I don't see any sense in that writing," said Joe. "It isn't Hindoo."

"Neither do I," admitted Jack, "but it means something just the same."

"How do you know?"

"Because the letters have been printed on a piece of parchment, which is a lot more durable than ordinary paper, and because no man, particularly a sailor, would take the trouble to print a lot of apparently meaningless letters on such a thing unless he had some definite purpose in view."

"There's something in that," nodded Joe. "But the blamed thing is worse than Greek. There doesn't seem to be any head or tail to it."

"That's the way with cryptograms."

"Do you call this a cryptogram?"

"That's my idea of it."

"I never saw one before," regarding the five lines curiously.

"Oh, this is only one kind of a cryptogram. There are more kinds of cryptograms than you have fingers and toes."

"Are there?"

"Sure. Cryptography is the art of writing in secret characters of cipher, so that any kind of secret writing may be called a cryptogram. I took a great interest in it once, and spent a whole lot of time, that might have been better employed, I guess, in studying out the meaning of various secret writings, and I have even invented several cryptograms of my own."

"Is that so? I'd like to know how to do it."

"I'll show you some time, when you can get up a scheme of your own, explain it to Daisy, and you two can write letters to each other that nobody but yourselves can understand."

"That would be fine. It would be great fun for us."

"It would be a lot of trouble to you both, though, and would really be time wasted unless there was now, reason for it—such as my uncle objecting to you holding any communication with Daisy."

"Why should he object. We are just good friends," said Joe, flushing.

"I merely made the statement as an illustration. Perhaps I can make my meaning clearer by stating that my uncle sometimes gets cipher messages from the Consular Department at Washington, and he sends similar messages in the same code. These messages go by cable, and it is not desirable that their purport be known to the operators, or other outsiders, en route. These messages are practically long cryptograms. Get me?"

"Sure I do."

"I will give you an idea of one or two cryptograms I came across while studying the subject, and then maybe you'll see the nature of cryptography. You've heard of Lord Bacon, of course?"

"You mean the chap who has been accused of writing Shakespeare's plays?" grinned Joe.

"Never mind about that. He couldn't have been accused of anything better in its line. He lived during the latter half of the sixteenth century. Well, he devised a cipher which consisted in an alphabet formed by different arrangements of the letters A and B in groups of five. A certain noted Irish secret organization used a cipher formed by taking in each case the letter previous to the one intended. I made up a dandy one which was formed by—"

Here the door opened and a Hindoo servant appeared.

"Sahib," he said, addressing Jack, respectfully, "an officer of the police is in the office downstairs. He wishes to see you."

"All right," said Jack. "To be continued in our next," he added to Joe, as he folded up the piece of parchment.

Unlocking his trunk, he put the supposed cryptogram into a small box for safe keeping, and told Joe he could go and talk with Daisy until he came back.

CHAPTER VII.

BY THE SKIN OF HIS TEETH.

Jack, when he entered the consular office below, found that the policeman had come to escort him to the stationhouse, where the chief was waiting to see him.

He learned that two batches of officers had been sent out—one to find the proprietor of the inn and take him in custody, the other to visit the hut on the edge of the marsh, and bring the two Hindoos and the corpse to the city.

Neither expedition was expected to return before the afternoon.

The chief, who had only heard the particulars at second-hand, wanted to hear the full story from Jack.

The boy ran upstairs and told Joe where he was going.

"When will you get back?" asked Joe.

"Maybe not for an hour, probably longer, for I think I ought to run out to Captain Trelawney's house and tell him my story. He'd think it rather shabby of me if I didn't. In the meantime you can amuse yourself in Daisy's society until you two get tired of one another's company. If I don't get back before you leave you can come over some time in the afternoon. I'll probably be around."

"I'd like to see if you can decipher that cryptogram, if it really is one, for I'm dead curious to find out what it is all about."

"The cryptogram will have to keep till I find time to get down to business with it. I must find the key of it first before I can do anything with it. A cryptogram is like a lock—it can't be opened up without a key."

Jack turned down stairs and went off with the policeman.

He was closeted with the chief for half an hour, and then he was allowed to go, after having been told that he would be sent for as soon as the inn proprietor, or the alleged Hindoo Thugs were brought in by the officers sent after them.

Jack then made a bee-line for Captain Trelawney's house—a villa on the suburbs.

The captain was a person of some importance in Madras, as he was a wealthy Englishman who held an official sinecure under government.

He had an office where the work was attended to by young English clerks, who worked about six hours a day on a moderate stipend, and spent it amusing themselves after the prevailing British plan.

The captain didn't hurt himself with the amount of work he did.

He had been brought up at home with the proper contempt for labor, and had only condescended to take the position in Madras because it was official, and therefore did not come under the head of work.

He felt it incumbent on him to visit his office once a day to receive the report of the gentleman whose business it was to see that the clerks did their duty, but he seldom remained there any longer than he could help.

When not at home he could generally be found at the British Club, and when not at either place it was safe to say he was out of town visiting some official friend.

He was generally regarded as a good fellow, and that was Jack's opinion of him.

The visit to the Temple of the Juggernaut had been undertaken by him in the interest of a visitor from Old England who was stopping with him for a few days, and he had invited Jack, to whom he had taken something of a fancy, to go along, and permitted the young American to invite his friend Joe Scudder.

As Jack had merely come to Madras to visit his uncle and family during his mid-year vacation, and had nothing more strenuous to do than to enjoy himself, and as the said uncle was in official life, Captain Trelawney considered the young American a proper person to be received by him on friendly terms.

When Jack reached the Trelawney villa, which he did through the agency of a native vehicle, for it never would have done for him to have walked there, he found that the captain and his visitor had gone to their rooms to recover from the effect of being up all night.

Mrs. Trelawney, who welcomed Jack with a delightful cordiality, told him that her husband would soon be in evidence, as tiffin, a light afternoon lunch, prevalent in India society, was about to be served, and, of course, the young American visitor was expected to share in the repast.

Jack was detailing his night's adventures to the interested lady when the captain made his appearance.

"How are you, my lad?" said the captain, who was in good

spirits. "You gave us quite an anxious spell of it, don't you know? How came you to give us the slip?"

Jack explained.

"Upon me word, you blundered badly that time, but as long as you've turned up all right we won't say anything more about it. From what we learned at the inn, you reached there in time to be of great assistance to one of your countrymen. On the whole I should judge it was lucky that you got lost."

"I had quite a time of it out in the thunderstorm," said Jack.

"Were you out in all that? Why, you must have been soaked through."

"I was; and I met with a peculiar adventure in connection with it."

"He was telling me about it when you came into the room," said Mrs. Trelawney. "It was a kind of creepy experience."

"Indeed. Go on, and let us hear how you came out."

The appearance of the guest of the house, and the announcement that the meal was on the table, temporarily interrupted the continuation of Jack's narrative, but he told it during the lunch, and the captain declared that he was a lad of courage and resource under difficulties.

"You should have been an Englishman," he said.

Jack, however, was perfectly satisfied to have been born under the Stars and Stripes.

In a little while he took his departure and returned home.

His uncle informed him that the dead sailor had arrived, but the police reported their failure to find Singh Smahl and Ram Rusti at the hut.

They had managed to free themselves and depart from the vicinity.

Jack was sorry they had made their escape, but as he doubted his ability to prove their complicity in the sailor's death, he did not worry much over the disappearance of the rascally Hindoos.

Had he been more acquainted with the natures of the two men he would not have felt quite so indifferent at the thought of them being at large.

Joe didn't call around until after dinner, and then it was dark.

Jack was looking out of the window, with Daisy, at a bunch of Mohammedans who were letting off firecrackers in honor of some festival which was just beginning.

Several tom-toms were being beaten in the near distance, and the streets were filled with people.

Not far away, in the open street, was a circle of bystanders all beating time, while in their midst four little girls were dancing, wearing a sarong, a kind of petticoat, but not otherwise embarrassed by apparel.

"Let's go out, old man, and see the sights?" said Joe.

"I'm on. I might as well see all I can while I'm here, for I don't suppose I shall come here again in a hurry, if ever," said Jack.

So the boys went out together, Daisy wishing she were a boy so she might go with them.

"We'll go to the native part of the town and see what's going on there," suggested Joe.

"I'm game to go anywhere you do."

They found plenty of life as they went along.

In the native town, on a tank in front of a temple, a raft was moving slowly.

Under a gorgeous canopy stood a golden idol, covered with garlands and jewels.

A dense crowd, fragrant with jasmine and sandal-wood, stood about the sacred pool and on the steps, bowing reverently as the image floated past.

"These people seem to think that the moon and stars rise and set in that senseless divinity they are kowtowing to," said Jack.

"They surely do. That's the way they've been brought up," said Joe.

"Seems to me there is a field of usefulness here for one or two of the missionaries that are sent out here to this country."

"Take it from me the missionaries that are on the ground have their hands full. Have you any idea how many million natives there are in India?"

"Can the statistics and let's move on," said Jack.

The streets were hung with gaudy flags and colored paper. Awnings had been erected, four poles supporting an awning with flounces of bright-colored silk, and under them a quantity of idols—Vishnus and Kalis—and vases filled with roses.

Near the temple, where the golden god, having left the tank, was receiving the flowers and scents offered by his

votaries, there was a howling crowd of Hindoos, all crushing and pushing, but going nowhere.

And louder yet the noise of the tom-toms, which the musicians raised to the desired pitch by warming them in front of big fires, throwing off clouds of acrid smoke.

The boys were caught in the fringe of this turmoil, and as they were trying to extricate themselves, two men, disguised in fantastic attire, bore down on them.

But for the fact that Jack always kept his eyes and wits about him he never would have seen another sunrise.

Both men had thin knives concealed in their flowing sleeves.

Jack noticed they were closing in on him, and this aroused his suspicion as to their intentions.

He suddenly pulled a young Hindoo between him and the pair just as they got within reach of him.

A terrible yell came from the young Hindoo's lips as two glittering knives pierced his back.

A scene of confusion ensued, in the midst of which Jack reached out and tore the fleecy covering from one of the men's faces.

The man stood revealed for a moment as Singh Smahl, then he and his companion pushed their way through the crowd and were gone.

CHAPTER VIII.

ANOTHER NARROW ESCAPE.

Joe Scudder was staggered by the murder of the young Hindoo so close to him.

Had he known that it was his companion's life which had been menaced by the murderers he would have been considerably more upset.

He learned the truth just as soon as Jack could pull him clear of the mob and tell him the facts.

"Great Scott! do you mean that those men intended to do you up instead of the chap they put their knives into?" he said.

"I am sure of it," replied Jack. "They're the chaps I encountered at the hut, and they've got it in for me. We had better get away from this locality as soon as we can. I'm going to the police headquarters to notify them that those scoundrels are in town in disguise and tried to kill me."

They kept away from the crowds after that and lost no time in reaching the headquarters of the police, where Jack told his story.

Officers were sent out at once to look for the rascals.

It was close to eleven when Jack parted from Joe and let himself into the consulate building.

He was tired and tumbled into bed as soon as he could get there.

His room opened on a rear prospect of yards, in some of which merchandise was stored.

He left his window wide open for air, and he didn't get half enough at that.

Jack's sleep, though deep from weariness, was troubled by dreams of the nightmare order.

The central figures in these phantoms of the brain were always Singh Smahl and Sam Rusti, wearing a horrible murderous look.

Finally Jack woke up, bathed in perspiration.

"Heavens, I'm glad I was only dreaming," he said to himself. "What a fierce nightmare I've had, and about those rascals. I suppose it was on account of the narrow escape I got from them over in the native town. I'll have to be careful of myself after this, for unless the police catch them they are going to get square with me for the laying out I gave them at the hut. There is no doubt in my mind that they have the instinct of Thugs even if the order itself has gone out of existence. Still, I've understood that Thugs always had an aversion to spilling blood, that's why they adopted the plan of strangling their victims. These two chaps, however, don't mind using their knives to accomplish their purpose."

At that moment Jack heard a scratching noise outside his window which put him in mind of the scratching sound he had heard on the side of the hut when Singh Smahl mounted to the roof.

The sound was so distinct that the boy sprang out of bed, and, going to the window, looked out.

He gave a gasp when he saw, outlined in the moonshine, the figures of the two scoundrelly Hindoos, one of them, whom he judged to be Singh Smahl, being boosted up from below by the other.

In a moment Jack decided what to do.

He had brought his cudgel with him from the hut, and it stood in a corner.

He also had a revolver handy.

He got both and prepared for the coming of his enemies.

To deceive the rascal who was climbing up when he looked into the room, Jack took both of his pillows and fixed them under the clothes to roughly resemble a sleeper, and he took a small, shaggy stuffed animal that stood as an ornament on a shelf and placed it half under the bed clothes so that it would look like the top of his head.

Retreating to one corner, he looked at the bed, which was partially exposed to the moonlight, and was satisfied that the illusion was very good and likely to deceive the scoundrel.

Then he crouched beside his small table in the shadow of the covering and waited for the Hindoo to appear.

Jack did not have long to wait.

A shadow was presently cast upon the floor and further wall of the room, and remained stationary for a few moments.

The rascal was evidently reconnoitering the situation.

Apparently satisfied that his victim was there and asleep, though it should have struck him as strange that any one in that hot climate could sleep with his head under the clothes, he proceeded to get in with the lightness and agility of a cat.

From under his girdle he drew a glittering knife, which reflected the sheen of the moonlight, and advanced noiselessly toward the bed.

Even then he did not notice the deception.

Suddenly he swooped upon the dummy, pushing his left hand down on the supposed head and then making three lightning stabs through the clothes.

Then he saw that something was not natural, for the presumed victim made not the slightest struggle or spasmodic movement that a human being would have done under the circumstances.

With a muttered exclamation he pulled the clothes aside and discovered the cheat.

But that was his last action, for Jack rushed upon him and brought his cudgel down on his head with stunning force, and Singh Smahl fell face down on the bed and never moved.

"That settles your hash, I guess," said Jack, grimly. "If I've killed you I don't care, for you deserve death, you scoundrel."

Dropping the club, he glided to the window, revolver in hand, and looked out.

Ram Rusti was waiting below for his companion to return.

"Throw up your hands, you rascal!" cried Jack, pointing his revolver at him.

The Hindoo was taken by surprise, but he did not comprehend the order to throw up his hands, although he understood the words.

Recognizing the boy, he took it for granted that he was about to be shot, and was proportionately alarmed.

"Mercy, sahib, mercy!" he cried.

"What mercy did you and Singh Smahl offer to me last night? None. I accidentally outwitted you. Now you have come here to try and make up for your error. It happens I was ready for you. I've got Singh Smahl and I've got you, too."

"Don't shoot, sahib. I swear by Kali I will do you no further injury if you let me go my way," said Ram Rusti.

"I intend to hand you over to the police and let them deal with you."

But even as he spoke the difficulty of doing so occurred to Jack.

The rascal was several yards out of his reach, and only held where he was by the revolver.

There was no one stirring in the neighborhood except themselves.

How was he going to capture the Hindoo?

There was no way unless he shot him or remained at the window the rest of the night keeping watch over it.

Both of these plans were objectionable to the boy.

At that juncture Jack heard a sound behind him.

He turned quick as a flash, thinking that Singh Smahl had come to his senses and was about to attack him.

The rascal lay in the position in which he fell, and Jack saw that the sound had been made by the knife slipping off the bed.

He turned his attention again to Ram Rusti, but, to his discomfiture, he found that the rascal had taken quick advantage of his chance and had noiselessly disappeared.

In what way he had made his escape the boy could not say, but he must have availed himself of some nearby outlet to the street.

At any rate he was gone, and there was no use of crying over spilled milk.

Jack returned to Singh Smahl, divested him of his outer

loin cloth and bound his arms tightly behind his back, after which he dragged him out into the dining-room and left him there.

He did not believe that Ram Rusti would return later, but he deemed it wise to provide against any chances.

He pushed the lower sash of his window down, and fixed it with a piece of wood which held the upper sash half way down.

Then he turned in, and, in spite of what he had passed through, he was soon asleep, and was troubled with no more bad dreams.

He woke up about eight o'clock and, getting into his clothes, visited the dining-room, where he found the male Hindoo cook of the household talking to Singh Smahl, who was trying to induce the man to release him.

The cook, however, judged that he had no right to interfere in the matter, for he did not know but that his master might have caught the prisoner in the house trying to rob the place, and had fixed him ready for the police to take charge of in the morning.

The appearance of Jack broke up the confab, and the cook retreated to his quarters, leaving the prisoner in the boy's hands.

"Well, Singh Smahl, what have you to say for yourself?" Jack asked him.

"Sahib, what is the meaning of this? Why am I a prisoner?" asked Smahl, looking virtuously indignant.

"You've a great nerve to ask that," replied Jack.

The Hindoo did not understand the Americanism of the boy's speech, but he comprehended a part of the meaning of the words.

"How did I get in this place?" he asked. "I must have taken too much wine during the festival, and did not know what I was doing."

"You tell that pretty well, you rascal, but you can't work any game like that off on me. The police are hunting for you and your friend Ram Rusti for the murder of the young Hindoo in his native town, and now that you are captured you are likely to get all that's coming to you," said Jack.

"Sahib, you talk in riddles. Did I not tell you I am a merchant and that Ram Rusti is a dealer in pearls? To accuse us of a murder is most ridiculous."

"All right. I'll let the police settle that with you. I dare say they can find enough witnesses of the crime to fix the murderer on you and your friend."

"Ah, sahib, you are doing us a great injustice," said Singh Smahl, looking as virtuous as a devout missionary.

"Why, you infernal scoundrel, you came here in the night to murder me."

"Impossible! Why do you say that?"

"Because I caught you in the act."

"Alas! Your words are an enigma to me. I must have been very drunk."

"Yes, I guess you were," responded the boy, dryly.

"Why should I come here to murder you when we are good friends?"

"As good friends as the hawk and the dove. If you are trying to excuse your conduct on the ground of drunkenness, I'll tell you right here that it isn't going to work. You wasn't drunk when you crept into my room through the window, sneaked over to the bed and stabbed the bed clothes several times, thinking you were doing me up. I was watching you, and I took a whole lot of pleasure in handing you a clip on the bean which put you in the fix you are."

Just then Consul Chapman came into the room and was amazed at what he saw.

Jack quickly explained the situation to him, and told him this was the chief Thug he had encountered at the hut, whom he believed was largely responsible for the sailor's death.

He took his uncle in his room and showed him the three stab marks in the bed clothes, and exhibited Singh Smahl's knife.

That was enough for Mr. Chapman, who called a servant and sent him to the headquarters of the police forthwith with a note.

Inside of twenty minutes Singh Smahl was taken away by two officers.

CHAPTER IX.

A MILLION IN RUBIES.

About noon Jack was summoned to attend at court, and as Joe was with him at the time, they both went together.

A British magistrate was on the bench, and Jack related his adventure at the hut, intimating, without actually making the accusation, that Singh Smahl and his companion, Ram

Rusti, who, by the way, was still at large, knew something about the manner in which the sailor came to his death.

Then he told about the visit he and Joe had made to the native town the evening before and positively identified Singh Smahl as one of the two assassins of the young Hindoo, explaining that the scoundrels really intended to kill him.

He wound up his testimony with what happened at the consulate during the night which culminated in the capture of Singh Smahl, and the near capture of Ram Rusti.

Joe corroborated that part of Jack's testimony relating to the murder of the young Hindoo, and also fully identified Singh Smahl as one of the murderers.

The Hindoo was returned to jail to await the disposition of his case.

The authorities intended to get hold of Ram Rusti and make an example of both of the rascals.

When the boys got back to the consulate Jack found a note there awaiting him.

It was from Mr. Dawson, who was now at the hotel in town with his daughter, and he invited Jack to call on him as soon as he conveniently could.

Jack could conveniently call at any time, particularly when there was a pretty girl in the case.

His recollection of Miss Dawson embraced a golden-haired fairy in a night robe, a bit white in the face from fright and anxiety, and though naturally at a great disadvantage under the circumstances, still had all the earmarks of what Jack called a hummer.

He was very anxious to meet her again under more suitable conditions, and so he welcomed the letter, and telling Joe he had business to attend to, he started at once for the hotel.

Jack never walked abroad, but his first impression of the place always recurred to him—that of a large collection of buildings which some gigantic force had swept to that locality and scattered at haphazard over the plain, with great barren places left between the houses.

In the native and Moslem quarters, it was true, there was a bunch of buildings, closely packed together within a limited area; but this was the exception to the rule.

The hotel where Mr. Dawson and his daughter were stopping was lost in a waste of open land beyond the seething native town.

Jack encountered a swarm of coolie servants, their wives and their children, who played all day under the trees.

A ceaseless hubbub of laughter and crying came from this litter of kids.

Jack found his way to the office, which looked very unlike the office of any hotel he had ever seen before, and securing the ear of a Hindoo clerk, succeeded in having his presence there announced to Mr. Dawson.

A very fat coolie came forward and escorted him to the American gentleman's apartments on the second floor, showing him in with a salaam, following after him and then posting himself at the door like an unwieldy statue with its arms folded.

Mr. Dawson was seated in a comfortable chair beside a window, and his daughter came forward with a smile to welcome Jack.

She was attired in a simple gown of white material, with a pink sash about her waist and a rose in her golden hair.

Jack thought she looked uncommonly attractive.

"It was kind of you to come so soon, Mr. Chapman," she said.

"Not at all. It was my duty to present myself, as soon as I learned you and your father were in town, to ask how he is getting on."

"I am doing very nicely," said the gentleman, extending his hand cordially to the boy. "I feel under great obligations to you for what you did for me at the inn directly after I was stabbed by that rascal. Had you not bound up my wound in the way you did, however crude your efforts, I would have lost much more blood, and that would have weakened me more, and have retarded my recovery. I don't know how to express my appreciation enough, but I won't forget your services, I assure you."

"I am very glad that I happened to be on the spot at the moment you needed me," answered Jack. "It was really quite accidental, and if you would like to hear how it happened, I will tell you the story."

Mr. Dawson said he would be glad to hear his story, and so Jack told it, beginning with the trip of the party he was with to the Temple of the Juggernaut, in Nysore village, and then explaining how he got lost in the jungle.

From that point he told of his own adventures in the jungle, on the wild waste of country during the thunderstorm, at the

hut on the edge of the marsh, and finally his appearance before the inn a few minutes before he heard the shrieks of Miss Dawson and answered them by reaching the room by way of the roof of the veranda.

Miss Dawson, whose first name was Edna, held her breath during a considerable part of his story.

When he had finished Mr. Dawson complimented Jack on his pluck and said he was worthy of the great country that gave him birth.

After that the conversation assumed a general character.

Mr. Dawson explained that he was in the wholesale lumber business and lived in the city of Belfast, Maine.

He said that he and his daughter were making a tour of the world, and that they yet had to visit Australia, Japan and other places on their itinerary, and would return home via San Francisco.

Jack told them that he had come to Madras to visit his uncle and family, and would soon have to go back via the Suez Canal route and England.

When Mr. Dawson learned that he lived with his mother in Boston he said that he would expect Jack to visit him and Edna at their Belfast home as soon as they got back from their trip.

He would take Jack's address, write to him enroute and finally notify him of their return to Maine.

He furnished the boy with his address in Belfast and took Jack's.

After a pleasant visit Jack took his leave, promising to call next day and, if it was convenient, take Miss Dawson to the consulate and introduce her to his aunt and cousin.

When he got back he found Joe still there, and learned that he had just returned with Daisy from a walk in the best part of the town.

"Say, old man," said Joe, "let's go to your room and have a try at that cryptogram. I'd like to see you work it out."

"Come on, but I can't promise that I'll be able to find the key. It may be easy and it may not. It all depends on the lines upon which it is constructed."

Jack got the parchment out of his trunk, and laying it out on his table, began to study it, with Joe looking interestedly on.

"How are you going to tackle it?" asked Joe.

"On account of it having been in the possession of an American sailor, and also because it looks like his work, I shall begin by assuming that the English alphabet was used in its make-up," said Jack.

"I should say there was no doubt about that," said Joe. "See, there's a short &, and there it is again. Every letter I see belongs to the English alphabet."

"The first thing is to find the letter that occurs most frequently, and that can safely be put down as standing for the letter E. Then the most common double vowels are ea and ou, and r, s and t are the most frequent terminal letters. Those facts are of no small assistance in forming a key to any given cryptogram," said Jack.

"You seem to have the idea down fine," said Joe. "Finding the most frequent letter should be easy enough. Anybody could get on to that by counting the number of times each letter appears on the parchment. As the words are divided off you can easily see what the terminal letters are."

"I know, but the division of the letters into apparent words might be a bluff, for the object of all cryptogram makers is to throw a solver off the scent as much as possible. Look at that letter Q in the last line all by itself. If this cryptogram is really divided into words the most natural inference is that that letter stands for A."

"That's right," said Joe. "Have you found the letter that appears the oftenest?"

"Yes. It's U. It appears 22 times—five times in the first and fourth lines, and six times in the second and third lines. I judge it is E."

"I notice that D appears quite often."

"Fifteen times."

"There seems to be as many Hs and Ys."

"There are 14 of each."

"I have counted 13 Gs."

"That's right, and there are 11 each of C, I and Q. There's another important fact—six of the presumed words are duplicated twice."

"I didn't notice that."

Jack pointed out the repetitions.

"Two of the pairs consist of only two letters, and there are also three other combinations of two letters. These might stand for such words as AN, ON, OF, etc. There are two dif-

ferent combinations of three letters, either one of which might stand for The."

"I suppose you have decided that U stands for E?"

"I think that's a safe bet."

"The letter D, being next numerous, stands for A, maybe?"

"Not necessarily. I think Q stands for A because it stands alone. I believe that is the weak point in this cryptogram and is going to lead to its solution. An expert never would have brought a single letter into such prominence in the formation of a cryptogram where the words appear to be spaced off. The sailor, who I believe to have been the author of this puzzle, was not an expert, and overlooked this very important point."

"Well, you've got hold of two of the more important letters, we'll say—E and A. Now, what letter does D represent? That comes next in number."

"There's little difference between D, H, Y and G, with C, I and Q close seconds. In figuring on the matter we must bear in mind that next to E the letters H, I, N, O and S are usually the letters mostly used in writing, with D, R, L, T and perhaps U pushing them hard. We may, therefore, conclude that the first six characters above stated for Q is decided on as A, represent six out of those ten."

"Go ahead and see if you can pick them out," said Joe.

"The characters that appear oftenest as terminals here are U, 8 times; C and H, 7 times each. We have already decided that U is E. I assume, then, that C and H represent either R, S or T, that is two of those three letters. As H appears oftenest through the cryptogram I will put it down as S, because S is used oftener, as a rule, in writing than R and T. C might stand for either R or T, but it doesn't follow that it does in spite of the fact that it appears so often as a terminal. N is a terminal of lots of words, and that fact must not be overlooked."

"You have a great head, Jack," said Joe, admiringly.

"C appears four times as the terminal of DC and YC. Neither can stand for AT as we have decided that Q is A, consequently neither D or Y is A. I don't believe that C stands for T, but rather for either N or R."

"I notice that U, D, H, T and A come together in five cases," said Joe.

"Yes. S, P, E N and other letters often come together in writing. We have fixed upon H as S. I don't see that I can do better than to keep tab on Q as A. There's a QI. That might stand for AT."

"Or AN."

"No. I think C is N. The third word in the first line is DC. Let us call that ON."

"Then we'll say that QI is AT."

"Till further notice."

"If D stands for O, what does DV stand for?"

"OF," said Jack at a venture.

"Good. You'll get there some time if you keep on," grinned Joe. "You've got seven letters right now—perhaps."

"I've got eight, for I believe Y is I. YC will go for IN without balling me up on what I've done so far."

"And YH is IS," cried Joe, finding that the combination jibed.

"Good boy, Joe. We've got the five two-letter combinations, apparently—ON, AT, OF, IN and IS."

"I've made out a real word," cried Joe, excitedly.

"Show up."

"The fifth on the second line—UQHI. It makes it EAST."

"Fine and dandy. If I could find out what G and B stand for I'd have the word next to it, for the first letter is F and the third is O."

"What's the matter with FROM—EAST FROM reads well?"

"Not bad. Let's call it so. It will give us two additional letters to work with."

"We have nearly half the alphabet now. This is getting easy. I can read all but the middle letter of the next word, but it doesn't make any sense that I can see," said Joe.

"Never mind that. We must work from the beginning to get the sense of the thing. The first word has four letters we know, but unfortunately the first and last ones are still mysteries and I can't make out what it is. The second word is just as bad, for two of the four letters are still undiscovered. The third is ON. The fourth reads OAST with the first letter missing. That S is mighty important. I've got the fifth word complete. It's FIFTEEN. We are surely on the right tack now. The sixth word—first and third letters missing—"

"MILES," shouted Joe. "FIFTEEN MILES."

"Fine as silk. You've got some head. That supplies two more letters. Now the sixth word. Two more letters missing. S, O, blank, T, blank."

"SOUTH," yelled Joe. "FIFTEEN MILES SOUTH. What's the matter with that combination?"

"Great. We're coming to it fast. DV is OF—fifteen miles south of. Now for the second line. M, A, blank, R, A, S."

"MADRAS," said Joe. "Fifteen miles south of Madras. Oh, I say, we are the people."

"Another letter gained. T stands for D. The next word is THREE. The next is MILES again. The next, DUE. The fifth is EAST. We've got this cryptogram on the run, Joe."

"Bet your life we have. The next word is FROM. I read that before."

"The next is the one you were stuck on. RAN, blank, OOR."

"What's the next one? The combination may give it to us."

"Blank, ILLA, blank, E," read Jack.

"I've got it," said Joe. "I've been there. It's Ranpoor Village."

"Good. That gives us three new letters. Now we've got seventeen."

"We haven't got on to that S yet. Gosh! I've got it," said Joe, looking back at the first three unfinished words. "It's C. The second word is CAVE and the fourth is COAST. I'll bet the first is WATER, no, WATERY. Read as far as we've gone."

"Watery cave on coast fifteen miles south of Madras, three miles due east of Ranpoor Village," read Jack.

"We've mastered half of it. The rest should be simple with twenty letters out of the twenty-six to work with."

And so it proved.

They had the whole cryptogram translated before them in a few minutes.

This is how it read in its complete state:

"Water cave on coast fifteen miles south of Madras, three miles due east from Ranpoor Village. Low tide shows three crosses on rock at entrance, south. In crevice behind rock is hidden a million in rubies."

"A million in rubies! Holy mackerel!" gasped Joe. "Do you believe it?"

CHAPTER X.

PLANNING TO LOOK FOR THE TREASURE.

Jack did not reply at once.

He was staring fixedly at the four lines and studying their import.

A million in rubies!

No wonder the information was concealed in the maze of a cryptogram.

India was the country of rubies and many other precious stones.

He had read and heard that the native rajahs, and other high Indian officials, possessed great fortunes in jewels.

In times past revolutions swept the country quite often, and the rich Hindoo princes and officials sometimes found it advisable to conceal their treasures when forced into sudden flight.

Perhaps this million in rubies represented one of those hidden treasures which the owner, owing, perhaps, to his death, or for some other reason, had failed to recover, and it still lay concealed in the watery cave where he had placed it, presumably, many years since.

Why not?

Jack looked at his friend.

"You ask me if I believe it?" he said, slowly.

"I do. It looks improbable to me," said Joe.

"If there was nothing in this information, why should it be hidden in cryptogram form? The sailor must have obtained the information somehow and intended to use it, though it seems to me he could just as well have carried it in his head as writing it down in the form he had it in, as the facts are easy to remember."

"Maybe he didn't make that cryptogram, but got it from somebody else. Maybe those two Hindoos, Singh Smahl and Ram Rusti, knew he had the parchment, followed him to the hut, and murdered him when he refused to give it up to them."

"That may be true," admitted Jack. "They made a thorough search of his pockets and ripped up the lining wherever there was any about his garments. They did not think of looking behind the lining of his hat, or my alpaca frightened them away before they got that far."

"And maybe the reason they have been so hot on your trail is because they suspect that you have possession of the parchment."

"I never dreamed of that."

"Well, the only way we can prove whether there is any truth in this information or not, is by going right to the spot mentioned and making a close search at the entrance to the watery cave at low tide. If we find a rock on the south side of the entrance with three crosses cut in it, we stand a chance of getting hold of a million in rubies—that is, if somebody else hasn't been there before us and taken it away."

"I'm ready to make the trip. A million in rubies is worth a lot of effort. You say you've been in Ranpoor Village?"

"Yes. It's a small Hindoo hamlet about fifteen or sixteen miles from this town. The ground all around it is tilled by the natives."

"We shall want to take a small compass with us so as to get and hold our bearing when we leave the village for the coast."

"I've got one home that will answer first rate."

"I suppose the Hindoos of the village and vicinity wouldn't interfere with us?" said Jack.

"No. They're all right."

"How came you to go there?"

"My father sold one of the farmers, as we call them, a plough, and I went there to collect the balance due on it."

"Did you go alone?"

"Yes. There wasn't any danger. The Hindoo paid me promptly, fed my horse and treated me to dinner."

"How long would it take us to get there on horseback? Is the road good?"

"There is no direct road. I went as far as I could along the Madras road, and then cut across the country to the village. It's a roundabout way of twenty odd miles, slow riding in some places. It took me about three hours to get there, and as many more coming back. I stayed there two hours, so you see I was practically the whole day on the round trip."

"Wouldn't it be better for us to hire a sloop and sail down the coast to the cave?"

"It might if we could count on the wind, on our ability to sail the boat, and on the certainty of finding the watery cave that way."

"We ought to be able to see the cave by keeping close in to the shore."

"You can't tell. It might be hidden by intervening rocks, or by the formation of the shore, or the height of the tide when we got there. Anyway, how are we going to tell when we've sailed fifteen miles from this town?"

"I guess it will be better to go by land," said Jack.

"That's my opinion. When we reach the village, which we can't miss, all we will have to do will be to face due east, and keep to it by compass till we strike the coast, then we'll be close upon the cave. If the tide is up or coming in we'll have to wait till it goes down."

"If we should be so lucky as to find the million in rubies, do you think we can carry all the stones in the bags that we'll bring with us for the purpose?"

"If the rubies are finished stones, and of the best quality, we'll be able to do it easily enough. A choice ruby is worth more than a choice diamond of the same size. There are rubies so valuable that I could carry \$100,000 worth in one hand."

"The rubies are, in my opinion, finished stones, and I guess that a large part of them are in settings. The treasure was doubtless hidden there by some Hindoo of high rank who was forced to skip his home in a hurry to avoid capture by his enemies. He must have had a large private collection of rubies, alleged to be worth a million. To prevent this collection from being lost to him, he carried it to the watery cave, which he was acquainted with, and hid it there, intending to recover it later. If the treasure is still there it will prove that he never came after it."

"If it is there, and we get it, how much of it do I get for my share?"

"I'll give you half," said Jack. "Half a million is enough for me, and you are a good fellow and an American to boot."

"Oh, I'm not entitled to so much. You own the cryptogram and would have made it out yourself without any help from me. Had I found it I never could have made head or tail out of it, as easy as it turned out in the end. It was only after you got explaining and digging into it that I began to see how the thing worked. Suppose you call my share one-third—that is, of course, if we find anything. If we don't find anything then my share of the trouble will be one-half. In any event, it will be a sort of adventure for us."

"All right. We'll let it go that way," said Jack.

"When do you want to set out on the trip?"

"Right away. To-morrow if we can manage it."

"I'll see about the horses. We'll use the same pair that carried us to Nysore Village the other day. I'll strap a couple of

native saddle bags on them before fetching them around here. You've got a revolver. You'd better fetch it, and I'll bring mine, though I don't think we'll have any need for them, but still it's well to be on the safe side."

"As we are pretty sure to be gone all day, and possibly well into the night, in case we are delayed by the tide, how shall we manage about eating? Can we get dinner in the village?"

"Yes, I guess we could buy a meal, but I'd prefer to carry my dinner with me. You want to get your cousin to put you up a nice fat package of eatables, enough to fill out two meals, with a bottle of native cordial and another of water."

"I'll speak to her about it."

"I'll provide the compass, and a hammer an cold-chisel, for we might need them. If you think of anything else between this and to-morrow morning, why, get it."

"All right, old man. I'll put this parchment away and keep it as a memento," said Jack, opening his trunk. "We'll take the translated copy with us, though I don't believe we will have any use for it. We don't need it to show us the way to the village, and once at the village we have only to walk east to the coast. As soon as we have located the cave, we shall find, if the tide is low, or when it gets low, three crosses on a rock at the south side of the entrance. In a crevice behind that rock the million in rubies is supposed to be hidden. Anybody of average brains could remember that. We don't need to fetch the paper."

"Well, I'm going home. By the way, you said all cryptograms have a key. What was the key of this one? Seemed to me that we just studied it out."

"The key was the letter Q. That represented A. Consequently R stood for B, S for C, and so on down to &, which represented K. Then A stood for L, B for M, and so on down to P, which stood for &, but didn't count for anything. F, M, O and P did not figure at all in the cryptogram; E, N and W only once each. I didn't get on to this until we had the puzzle practically solved. Although we did not apply the key in the right way, still our success was due largely to the fact that I took Q for A instead of one of the other letters that appeared frequently."

"And you did that because one of the Qs stood by itself like the article A?"

"I admit that influenced my action."

"You could make any letter in the alphabet the key letter, couldn't you?"

"Of course, but it must always stand for A. Instead of taking Q, as in this case, you could use X. In that case Y would stand for B, and so on. Get me?"

"Sure. That's easy. Is it necessary to put in the &?"

"No, but it adds effect to the look of a simple cryptogram like this one."

"But the government ciphers are built on a harder plan, aren't they?"

"They are altogether different. They are practically unsolvable to one not acquainted with the code. When a government communicates weighty matters with its ambassadors, for instance, it would never do for a third party to get an inkling of the message, particularly in these days of sharp newspaper correspondents."

"That's right," nodded Joe, who then took his departure.

CHAPTER XI.

ON THE ROAD TO THE WATERY CAVE.

After Joe had gone, Jack remembered that he had promised the Dawsons to visit them the next day, and bring Miss Edna over to see his aunt and cousin.

He sat down and wrote Mr. Dawson a brief note telling him that he would be obliged to postpone his visit for a day owing to an engagement he had made to take a trip down the coast to Ranpoor Village.

He sent the note to the hotel by a servant, who had instructions to deliver it personally to Miss Dawson or her father.

At dinner Jack told his uncle that he and Joe were going to visit Ranpoor Village next morning, and they expected to be gone all day.

"What do you expect to see in that place?" asked his uncle, who knew it was a small, unimportant hamlet.

"Nothing, but it's the nearest point to a marine cavern on the coast that we are going to."

"I never heard there was a marine cavern anywhere along the shore that was worth looking into."

"This one has a certain attraction that we intend to investigate."

"Well, I have no objection to you going, as I know of no danger you are likely to run across unless you tumble into the sea of your own accord."

"Don't you worry about our doing that. Life has a sugary attraction for us at present, and we have no wish to cut it short."

"Couldn't you take me along, Jack?" asked Daisy.

"Not very well. We're going to rough it," said Jack.

"I wish I were a boy," pouted the young lady.

"You'd make a pretty one, but then you'd miss all the fun you have flirting with the English clerks at the receptions and dances."

"I do enjoy putting it over those Johnny Bulls," she laughed.

"Daisy, I'm surprised at such language from you," said her mother, severely.

"Blame it on me, aunt. She's heard me say that," said Jack.

"A boy enjoys some license in that respect, though that does not excuse him in my opinion; but for a young lady like Daisy—"

"Now, mother, no lecture, please," protested the girl.

"Tell her to can them," whispered Jack, with a grin.

"Jack told me to tell you to can them," said Daisy, with a malicious smile at her cousin.

"What do you mean by that, Jack?" asked his aunt.

"Well, if you must know, it means to cut them out—forget them."

"Slang, I presume? Aren't you ashamed of yourself to suggest such a reply to Daisy?"

"Yes, aunty. Observe how I am blushing. It was just a joke of mine. I did not think Daisy would give me away. She ought to be more of a good fellow."

"I wish you wouldn't put such expressions into her head. She's bad enough now, goodness knows."

"Oh, mother! Why, I heard you tell Mrs. Algernon Montmorency the other day that I was a little tin angel on—"

"Daisy!" cried her mother. "I'm horrified."

"Yes, mother, you look it," said the girl, demurely.

"Let's adjourn," put in Jack, pushing back his chair. "Daisy," he said as he and his cousin walked out of the dining-room, "the next time you give me away I'll do something awful to you."

"That's the time I had one on you," she giggled.

"Wait till I see Joe in the morning and I'll put him wise to something."

"Don't you dare tell him anything about me."

"After what I've gone through at the hands of Singh Smahl and Ram Rusti, you can't frighten me, couzie, dear. Give me a kiss and I'll call everything square."

"I will not."

"Yes, you will. I can see you puckering up your lips now."

"I wouldn't kiss you if you were the last— Oh!"

The exclamation was caused by Jack grabbing her in his arms and stealing the kiss.

"Aren't you the horrid bear?"

"I'm only a cub yet. Say, Daisy, here's a good one. In what respect does a bald-headed man resemble a childless monarch?"

"What is the resemblance?"

"Neither has any hair—heir apparent."

"Aren't you smart? I've heard that before. Father sprung it on me when I was a little girl, and he said he heard it when he was a boy from his grandfather, who got it from his grandfather. It's old enough to have no hair apparent itself. Next time you try to be funny, get off something new."

"The newest thing in town that I know of is Dr. Smith's baby, which arrived by stork post this morning at six o'clock," chuckled Jack.

"I suppose you intend that as a joke?"

"No, the baby isn't any joke—he's very much alive."

"Let's talk about something else. I want to know what you expect to investigate at that marine cave you're going to see to-morrow."

"You won't tell any one if I tell you?"

"No."

"Say honor bright and cross your fingers."

Daisy did so.

Jack looked mysteriously around and then whispered in her ear:

"Joe and I are going there to find out why the sea is salt."

"Aren't you a mean thing!" cried Daisy.

Jack said that he and Joe were going to the marine cave on private business, and he would let her know all about it when they got back.

"But I want to know now," she pouted.

"I'm sorry, but Joe and I agreed to keep the matter a secret."

That was all she could get out of him on the subject.

He told her that he wanted her to put up a nice large lunch

for him in the morning that would answer for two meals, and she promised to do it; for she knew Jack would soon have to return to Boston, and there was hardly anything she wasn't willing to do for him.

At half-past nine next morning Joe appeared on horseback, leading the animal Jack was to ride.

He found Jack all ready to start.

That lad came downstairs with his food package under his arm, a revolver in his pocket, and his trusty club in his hand.

"What do you want that club for?" asked Joe. "Haven't you got your gun?"

"That club has saved me on several strenuous occasions, and I love it like an old friend. It goes with me on this occasion," replied Jack.

"All right. I have no objection, but I should think you'd find it in your way."

"Not at all. I shall stuff it in one of the saddle-bags."

Five minutes later they were on their way up the street.

"We'll stop a moment at the headquarters of the police," said Jack. "I want to learn if they've caught Ram Rusti."

When they came to the building, which was on their way, Jack dismounted and went inside.

"Have you nabbed that other Hindoo yet—Ram Rusti?" he asked an officer.

"No, we haven't, and, what is worse, Singh Smahl cut away the bars of his cell last night and made his escape."

"The dickens he did!" gasped Jack, staggered by the intelligence.

The officer assured him it was an unpleasant fact, and that half a dozen of the police force were out looking for him.

"That's tough after the trouble I had in capturing him," said Jack. "It's a wonder you people wouldn't keep a closer watch over such a slippery customer. He's got it in for me worse than ever, and if he does me up you gentlemen will have a lot to answer for. Good-morning."

He walked out and got on his horse again.

"What do you think, Joe, Singh Smahl flew the coop last night," he said.

"Do you mean to say he escaped from the jail?" said Joe.

"That's what they told me. You have the finest police in the world here—I don't think."

"That's too bad," said Joe.

"They won't catch him, for they haven't been able to find Ram Rusti, nor Charak, the inn-keeper. I don't like the idea of Singh Smahl being at large. He's sure to try and get back at me. He and Ram Rusti are like a pair of snakes in the grass. You never can tell where they are till they're right on top of you."

They took the Madras road branch that ran to the south—a continuation of the main highway—and stuck to it for a matter of six miles, when Joe turned off across the country, and Jack followed him.

They passed small Hindoo farms by the score, and saw the men and women at their work.

These people still clung to their primitive attire—the dress of the male consisting of two pieces of cotton cloth, one girt about the loins and extending to the ankles, the other worn over the shoulders.

The women wore a single piece of cloth, anywhere from four to seven yards long, which enveloped most of their body, and sometimes covered their head, too.

About one o'clock the boys stopped under a tree, not far from the rather pretentious dwelling of a well-to-do Hindoo farmer, got out their food and ate what they wanted, washing the repast down with a sweet, light wine.

Their horses were not tied, but permitted to walk around as they pleased, nibbling the grass and drinking from a rivulet which flowed across the path they were following.

While the boys were resting at their ease they were suddenly startled by a succession of female screams from the house near by.

They sprang on their feet and looked.

"Something's doing," said Jack. "Come on."

He and Joe rushed across the intervening space, and Jack led the way into the house through the open door.

In the middle of the room a rough-looking Hindoo was struggling with three women whose hold he was trying to shake off, but the tenacious way they clung to him, in spite of the knife he gripped in one of his hands, showed great pluck on their part.

The men folks were evidently away somewhere, a fact the rascal had taken advantage of to rob the household, but he was having no easy job of it.

But he was gradually getting the better of the women, whose combined strength was not equal to his endurance.

Just as Jack rushed in he had succeeded in getting his arm free and was in the act of stabbing one of the women when Jack seized him by the wrist.

The fellow turned upon the boy with a snarl, and Jack recognized him as Charak, the innkeeper, but very much the worse in looks and attire from what he saw him last.

CHAPTER XII.

THE WATERY CAVE.

"So it's you?" said Jack, disarming him with Joe's help. "At your old tricks again. I guess you'll fetch up now in the Madras jail. It takes an American to catch chaps of your stamp."

Charak roared out some kind of invective in Hindooostanese.

Jack guessed it was a threat of some kind, for his eyes snapped viciously and he struggled to break the hold of the two boys.

"Speak United States," said Jack.

"You no let me go, I'll kill you first chance," hissed Charak.

"If I can help it you won't get the chance," replied Jack. "Your kind intentions are only exceeded by your rascally looks. Get something to tie him with, Joe."

When Joe let go of him, two of the women grabbed his arm, and he had as much chance of making his escape as a fly has of swimming a stream of molasses.

The woman whom Jack had saved from being stabbed, and who appeared to be the chief woman of the house, began talking volubly to the boy, doubtless expressing her sense of obligation to him; but she might just as well have remained silent, for Jack didn't understand a word she said.

Joe came back with a rope. Charak was tripped up and fell to the floor.

Jack held his arms while Joe tied them to his side.

Then the boys dragged him into a corner.

The woman of the house once more rattled off a speech to Jack, while the other two men opened on Joe.

Jack had to resort to the sign language, but not being much of a pantomimist, it is a question whether the woman caught much of his meaning.

However, she easily made out that he couldn't understand nor talk the Hindoo language, and her features expressed regret thereat, for she was deprived of the pleasure of telling him how grateful she felt toward him.

She did the best she could by seizing the boy's hand and pressing it to her lips, and then laying it against her forehead.

Jack, on his part, bowed politely to her, raised her fingers to his lips, and smiled cheerfully.

The woman blushed a little, smiled back and then pointing to a seat, indicated her desire for him to be seated.

He sat down and so did Joe.

The other two women, in obedience to an order, left the room, but presently returned with some fruit, some rice cakes, and a flagon of sweet cordial.

"I guess we'll have to oblige these women by nibbling a little," said Jack to Joe.

Accordingly they got away with a rice cake and a little fruit, and drank some of the wine.

Then they got up and indicated that they would have to go.

Jack pointed at the prisoner, and then in the direction of Madras, or where he supposed Madras lay.

Whether the woman understood his meaning or not, she nodded, and the boys started to look up their horses, followed outside by the women.

The animals had not wandered far and they were soon on their way to the village.

They reached Ranpoor in less than an hour, took their compass bearings, and headed for the coast without loss of time.

After passing by the farms in the immediate neighborhood, they found the landscape wild and barren, and difficult of keeping in anything like a straight line.

"I'm afraid we're going to have trouble in fetching the cave," said Jack.

"We'll have to do the best we can," replied Joe.

They made slow progress and frequently had to go out of their way to avoid obstructions in their path.

The afternoon was well spent when they finally reached the shore within sight of the water, tethered their animals to a tree and started to look for the cave.

The coast was rocky and the shore difficult of access.

They had lost their bearings so far as the cave was concerned, and the only way they could find it was to make a close search for it.

After awhile they discovered a ravine that led down to a small patch of beach.

They gained nothing going there, for the rocks projected out on either side into the water, and they found themselves in a water pocket, with the view up and down cut off.

All they could see was the limitless expanse of the inward sweep of the Indian Ocean, the rocks rising around them and the ravine behind.

"The tide appears to be down," said Joe, noting the line of seaweed which marked the limit of the last high tide.

"It may be coming in or going out," responded Jack. "I should like to look around the point of that rock and also the one opposite. Either might command a view of the cave."

"If the water isn't too deep we can wade out that far, keeping close to the rocks. You could go out on one side while I could try the other," said Joe.

"What's the matter with our swimming out if we can't wade?"

"We'll do it."

They took off their clothes and started first to wade.

The water deepened slowly to their waists as they went forward.

Joe was halfway out on his side, when he suddenly disappeared with a plunge.

Jack stopped and waited for him to reappear.

He came up in a moment or two and continued on swimming.

He had stepped off the rock into a hole, or break, on that side, and could have regained his footing a yard further on.

Jack had better luck on his side and when he reached the point which commanded the view to the south, he was standing a little above his waist in the water.

"What do you see, Jack?" asked Joe, from across the narrow opening.

"Nothing that looks like a cave," replied Jack. "What do you make out?"

"A rocky shore, that's all, with no beach. There's no sign of a cave."

"We'll have to go back and continue on as we were doing."

"Looks that way."

Back to the sandy pocket of beach they went and resumed their garments.

"I'm afraid this expedition is going to prove a failure," said Joe, as they started up the ravine.

"I hope not. I don't like to be disappointed."

"Neither do I."

Extricating themselves from the ravine they kept on to a point where a long, low, rocky promontory ran out some distance from the shore.

"We'll go out on this," said Jack. "It will enable us to get a good view of the shore in both directions for some distance up and down."

It was not easy walking the narrow ledge of rock, and they had to feel their way, holding on frequently with their hands in a crawling attitude.

Naturally, they proceeded slowly, and they perspired freely, for they were fully exposed to the sun, which shone from the direction of the land.

They watched the line of shore as they opened it up further and further.

At length by great effort they reached the extreme end of the promontory.

"What's that indentation over there?" asked Jack, pointing to a spot something less than a quarter of a mile away.

"By George!" cried Joe. "It looks like the arched opening into a cave, with a watery floor to it."

The boys looked at it carefully and were assured it was a cave, and probably the one they were in search of.

"How are we going to get to it?" said Joe. "There is no beach leading there that I can see."

"We'll have to keep on down the coast till we come to the back of it and then try to reach it down over the rocks."

"But how will we know when we get close to it?"

"That will be easy. See that bunch of seven trees growing close to the spot on this side?"

"Yes. That will be a good guide. Come on, let's get back over these rocks."

They encountered the same difficulties in getting back to the coast line as they had in creeping out to the end of the promontory, and more time was thus consumed.

Then they continued south toward the bunch of seven trees which they could not always keep in sight.

That did not matter, for they knew about where the trees were.

Even had the trees not been there to act as a landmark they would have been able to locate the cave by keeping the end of

the promontory in sight and calculating the distance of the space between as they proceeded.

However, the trees were a sure guide, and in due time they reached them.

They had noticed that the rocks projected out a bit to the north of the cave.

The rocks also projected out on the south.

Walking out to the projecting ledge on the north, which lay directly opposite the seven trees, the boys found they could reach the lower point of the ledge, which ran down into the water at a right angle, without great difficulty, but the ledge itself cut off the view of the cave.

Jack was in advance, and when he reached almost to the end of the shelving rocks he leaned over and looked around.

He looked straight into the mouth of a fair-sized marine cavern.

"Eureka!" he cried, exultantly. "We're right upon it, Joe."

"Hurrah!" ejaculated his companion, pushing forward to his side and leaning over the rocks to get a look. "That's the watery cave for sure."

"It must be. But we'll either have to wade or swim from this point, for there isn't a foothold on the rocks anywhere."

"Let's wade if we can. We've got to carry the hammer and chisel, and I don't believe in leaving our clothes with our revolvers behind. There's no place here to leave our duds, anyway. We'd have to go back to the top of the shore again. If we go in over our heads we'll swim, and our clothes are so few and light it doesn't make a whole lot of difference if they do get soaked. The heat in the air will dry them in a short time. Come on."

Jack entered the water and found it up to his waist.

Joe followed after him.

The bottom felt smooth and sandy, but not soft sand.

They did not sink into it at all.

Striking straight out for the mouth of the cave they noticed that the depth of water remained about the same, growing, perhaps, a couple of inches shallower as they drew near the entrance.

Jack made for the southern point of the entrance and soon reached it.

"See any crosses?" asked Joe, eagerly.

"No," replied Jack, scanning the outermost rock, which faced the sea at a sharp angle.

Joe reached his side and looked, too.

"Maybe they are still out of sight under water," he said. "We can't tell but the tide will drop a foot or two."

"We must watch the water line and see if it is still receding."

Jack placed his finger on a level with the water and held it there.

"I'll take a look in the cave while you are waiting," said Joe.

He waded in, the water gradually growing shallower as he proceeded, for the floor of the cave was on an incline.

A projecting rock soon hid Joe from Jack's sight.

As the minutes passed it seemed to Jack that the tide was still going out, but as his finger had slipped on the wet surface of the rock he couldn't make certain.

Jack leaned against the rock and allowed his gaze to wander out over the sun-kissed water toward the far-off line of the horizon.

Then he looked at the projecting promontory where he and Joe had caught their first glimpse of the watery cave.

His thoughts also wandered back to America, and the shores of Nahant and other seaside resorts he had visited in the summer time in seasons past.

Suddenly he woke up and came back to the business in hand.

He looked down at his finger.

The water had receded several inches, and right below his finger three deep crosses were carved in the rock.

He uttered a shout and looked around for Joe.

That lad was just coming into sight around the corner of the projecting rock.

"I've found the crosses," cried Jack; "come and look at them."

"I thought you would," responded his friend, "and I've found something, too."

"What did you find?"

"An exit at the back of the cave through a curtain of bushes. We can leave that way. It's a whole lot easier than by wading out to the rocks yonder and regaining the top of the shore the way we came."

Joe reached his side and looked at the three crosses.

"This is the spot," said Jack; "a million in rubies is hidden here."

As he raised his hammer to tap the rock the boys heard sounds behind them.

Turning, they saw the rascally Singh Smahl and Ram Rusti on the rocks.

With a shout of triumph the two rascals sprang into the water and came at them.

CHAPTER XIII.

CONCLUSION.

"Oh my! who is this coming?" ejaculated Joe, in a tone of alarm, when he saw that one of the rascals was waving a big sword in a menacing way.

"Out with your gun, Joe—quick! That's Singh Smahl in advance, and the other is Sam Rusti. We've got to stand them off even if we have to shoot them," cried Jack, driving his right hand into his pocket, after dropping the hammer, and whipping out his dripping revolver.

Joe followed suit.

They cocked their weapons and aimed them at the two scoundrels.

The Hindoos stopped aghast at the sight of the guns.

"Don't shoot, sahib. We wish to be friends," said Singh Smahl.

"You do in a ram's horn. Drop that saber, Ram Rusti, or I'll drop you," cried Jack.

Ram Rusti dropped his hands in the water, but held on to the weapon.

Jack suspected he still had hold of it and ordered him to hold up his arms.

He shoved the blade of the sword between his legs and then held up his arms.

The movement was so apparent to Jack that he lost patience with the rascal.

"You have that sword between your legs. I told you to drop it."

Ram Rusti saw that he meant business, and he was compelled to obey.

"Now clear out of here, both of you!" said Jack.

They backed away through the water till they reached the point where they could clamber up on the projecting rocks.

They retreated a few yards on the other side of the rocks and then stopped to consult.

"Sneak out there, with your gun ready for business, and see where they went to," said Jack to his companion.

Joe did so.

He peeped around the corner of the rocks and saw the rascals a short distance away.

Without saying a word he fired a bullet close to their heads to scare them.

The shot produced the effect intended.

The Hindoos rushed to cover and then Joe returned to the cave.

"I dropped the hammer in the water," said Jack; "but maybe we don't need it. The parchment said that the rubies were hidden in a crevice behind the rock. Let us hunt for the crevice."

The crevice was found and Jack shoved in his arm.

His fingers encountered something that felt like a couple of bags.

He drew one of them out.

It proved to be a weighty bag of thick material, and was secured at the mouth by a strong cord, wound several times about the neck and sealed with wax a quarter of an inch thick.

"Here's a part of the million," said Jack, exultantly. "Our quest has proved successful. Catch hold of it while I reach for the other."

Joe took the bag, regarding it with great curiosity.

Jack fished out the second bag, which was smaller, and the feel of that showed that it was full of unset stones as far as could be judged.

Holding it in his left hand, he inserted his arm again into the crevice, but there was nothing more in the hole.

"These two bags represent the alleged million in rubies. As there is nothing else in the hole, we need not remain here any longer. I guess you made a lucky discovery when you found a way out of the cave at the back. Those two rascals are doubtless in hiding close by, waiting for us to return the way we came here, and they plan to take us off our guard. We shall probably be able to give them the slip. Go out to the rocks and take another look and see if you can make out where the villains are, then we will leave by the rear of the cave," said Jack.

Joe did as he was asked to.

He returned and reported that he could see no signs of the Hindoos.

Leading the way, with the big jewel bag in his left hand and his revolver in his right, Joe started for the back of the cave, and Jack followed him.

The cave gradually narrowed to a small passage, which terminated in a hole, screened by thick bushes.

Through these they cautiously pushed their way and looked carefully around.

They deemed it wise to make a detour to the south, so as to give their enemies as wide a berth as possible, and then they started for the spot where they had left their horses.

They were so fortunate as to reach the spot before darkness came on.

It suddenly occurred to Jack that perhaps the Hindoos knew where they had left their horses, and instead of hiding near the cave had ambushed themselves where the waiting animals were, thinking it a more likely place to catch the boys off their guard.

He mentioned his suspicions to Joe, and his friend agreed that it would be wise for them to be cautious.

They approached the place with as little noise as possible, and looked sharply around through the bushes and trees, but saw no evidence of the enemy.

"I guess they're not here," said Joe.

"I don't intend to take any chances. Leave your bag with me, go forward, unhitch the animals and lead them into the open space yonder. I will watch, and if the rascals show themselves I'll shoot at once," said Jack.

Joe, with his weapon ready for action, went forward and showed himself.

Nothing happened till he began releasing the horses, then Jack saw one of the Hindoos, which one he couldn't tell, creeping upon him with a knife in his teeth.

Jack waited till he had got a good aim, and then fired.

The rascal uttered a hoarse cry and pitched forward on his face, where he lay still.

Joe turned quickly and saw the motionless form of Ram Rusti bleeding from a wound in his neck.

He hurriedly released the horses and led them out into the open ground, looking out sharply for Singh Smahl.

As soon as Joe had the two animals out from under the trees, where the other rascal would have to show himself to reach them, Jack made a rush and joined him.

The bags of treasure were quickly dropped into two of the saddle-bags, the boys mounted and rode off in the direction of the village.

They had gone but a short distance when night overtook them, but with the disappearance of the sun the stars came out in all their glory, shining so bright that the landscape was fairly lighted up.

The boys kept constantly on the watch with their revolvers cocked in their hands, so that Singh Smahl, if he was creeping after them in the shadow of the bushes, was wise enough to refrain from making any attack on them.

He knew that lead traveled faster than he could act, and, being no fool, he did not care to take any desperate chances even for the big stake he was after.

And so the boys went on through brush and brake, and around the many obstructions lying in their path, in safety, and finally came in sight of the village.

There was little going on there at that hour.

The few Hindoos they met looked at them curiously, no doubt wondering whence they had come, and why they were abroad in that part of the country after nightfall.

Passing through the village they reached the open fields, and here they felt pretty safe from Singh Smahl, for they were able to put on speed.

Across the open country they galloped at a rapid rate, and in due time reached the branch road that would take them right into Madras.

An hour later they reached the consulate, dismounted and went upstairs.

The hour was ten, and the Chapman family was gathered in the sitting-room.

Mr. Chapman was reading a copy of the London Times, which had arrived that day, Mrs. Chapman was sewing, while Daisy was deep in a new novel, loaned her by an admirer who was employed in Captain Trelawney's office.

"So you boys have got back," said the American consul, looking at them. "Pon my word, you look badly rumpled up, as if you'd been in the water with your clothes on."

"You've made a good guess, uncle," said Jack. "We have been in the water with our clothes on."

"Have you taken to bathing that way?" laughed Mr. Chapman.

"No, sir. We found it convenient to go in that way, that's all."

"Perhaps you will explain why?"

"Certainly. We were after a million in rubies."

"A million in rubies! What do you mean?"

"Put the bags on the table, Joe, and let my uncle and the family gaze upon the treasure which we suppose is worth a million."

Mr. Chapman dropped his paper, his wife her sewing, and Daisy her novel.

The attention of the three was concentrated upon the peculiar looking bags.

Mr. Chapman got up to take a closer look.

He saw right away from the private seal of a certain famous, but dead and gone rajah, that the bags contained something of undoubted value.

"Where did you find these bags, Jack?" he asked.

In a marine cave, three miles east of Ranpoor Village."

"The place you went to investigate?"

"Yes, sir."

"May I ask whether you found these bags by accident, or if you had a previous knowledge that they were in the cave, and the object of your journey was to find them?"

"The latter fact is the right one."

"In what way did you secure this knowledge?"

"Through a cryptogram I found in the lining of the dead sailor's hat in the hut on the occasion when I was overtaken by the thunder storm."

"You never said anything about the cryptogram before."

"I know it. Joe and I did not solve it till late yesterday, and then we made up our mind to go to the cave right away and verify the information it contained. The bags before you are evidence that we succeeded."

"Tell us the whole story."

Jack did so, and the Chapman family were lost in astonishment.

The small bag was opened first and found to contain a large collection of valuable rubies of various sizes.

At a rough estimate Mr. Chapman figured their value at three-quarters of a million.

The large bag was then opened and contained a collection of rings and other pieces of jewelry, all set with rubies of different sizes.

Mr. Chapman said the lot was easily worth a quarter of a million.

"Then we have really secured a million in rubies," said Jack.

"All of that, I should think," said the consul. "You have come in possession of the long missing and famous collection of rubies that once belonged to the Rajah Maler Kotla. It disappeared shortly before his death, and was believed to have been stolen by a trusted servant, who disappeared mysteriously. It will hardly be well, even at this late day, for the news of your recovery to be made public in this country. The stones and jewelry must be secretly shipped to America. They can go in the same steamer with yourself, and consigned in bond to the Custom House in New York. I will provide you with a letter to deliver to the Secretary of the Treasury, and he will arrange for the disposition of the rubies. He will see that they are sold to good advantage for your benefit, and the Government will retain their twenty-five per cent. duty."

"Then the Government will get a quarter of the treasure?" said Jack.

Mr. Chapman nodded.

"That will leave me half a million and Joe a quarter of a million. Well, I guess we can worry along on that."

And so the matter was arranged and duly carried out.

Joe went to the States with Jack to receive his share of the fortune, and the amount the boys eventually received, after deducting the large duty, proved that the cryptogram had told no story when it stated that behind the rock in the watery cave would be found a million in rubies, declared by the Treasury Department to be the richest find in the world.

Next week's issue will contain "TOM, THE BANK MESSENGER; OR, THE BOY WHO GOT RICH." (A Wall Street Story).

SEND POSTAL FOR OUR FREE CATALOGUE.

CURRENT NEWS

Chris Van der Ahe, most noted of St. Louis baseball team owners and pilot of the Browns when they were pennant winners in 1881, 1882 and 1883, died in St. Louis, June 5. He had been ill several months. Von der Ahe made and lost two fortunes. He had been in the saloon business for several years.

John Hollenbeck, an amateur motorcycle racer from Flint, Mich., was instantly killed at the Detroit Motor-drome the other afternoon when he lost control of his machine and plunged into a hole at the top of a track. The rider was making a speed of about 50 miles an hour. It was the first fatality on the local track.

A somewhat unique example of "subway" electric line is found in the Paris sewers. Here the tunnels are of unusually large size and, as is well known, they afford a considerable passageway, carrying large water and gas piping on roof and sides as well as electric cables of various kinds. A recent idea has been to install a small electric road in one part of the tunnel so as to carry men and material. The miniature cars are drawn by a front motor car which works by a trolley from a pair of wires run along the ceiling, and quite a train of the small cars is taken in this way.

A prisoner in the Ploetzensee prison, near Berlin, named George Schlick, has made various attempts to force the prison authorities to discharge him, or, at any rate, remove him to the hospital ward. He at first simulated insanity, and when this failed to deceive the authorities he started a hunger strike. He is a powerfully built man, however, with a great appetite, and the pangs of hunger finally conquered his resolution. He then adopted a new scheme. While making bags in prison he carefully concealed as many needles as he could and while at work with his fellow prisoners he swallowed the lot. He was hurried to the hospital, where he became unconscious. Afterward he was removed to a Berlin hospital, where he was to be operated upon. The man was in a critical condition.

All have read of carnivorous plants, of laughing plants, and of plants that weep; but who has heard of a plant that coughs? There is the authority of a French botanist, however, for the statement that a plant in various tropical regions actually possesses the power to cough in the most approved manner. The fruit of this plant resembles the common bread bean. It appears that the coughing plant is something of a crank, that it easily works itself into a rage, and that it has a horror of all dust. As soon as a few grains of dust are deposited on its leaves, the air chambers that cover their faces and are the respiratory organs of the plant become filled with gas, swell, and end by driving out the gas with a slight explosion and a sound that resembles so much the cough of a child suffering from a cold as to carry a most uncanny sensation to the one beholding the phenomenon.

Representative Frank B. Willis, of Ohio, has been despoiled of just one-half of his laurels won recently as spelling champion at the contest between newspaper men and statesmen. The Secretary of Agriculture, David F. Houston, who was the judge, declared that the honors should be equally divided between the Ohioan and Senator Miles Poindexter, of Washington. The word which brought about the temporary disqualification of Mr. Poindexter was "hydrocephalus." Professor Houston pronounced the word, having in mind the noun as given in the old blue-backed speller, and the Senator spelled "hydrocephalous," the adjective, and was declared to have lost. The probable result will be a spelling match to decide the relative ability of the House and Senate, as both contestants declare they are ready to meet all comers on the orthographical field of honor. Members of both houses insist that the newspaper men are not entitled to another try, as there is no question about any of the words which the writers missed. It was a close finish, as only two members of the winning team were on their feet when the last newspaper man was defeated.

The largest stone ever quarried has been found in Baalbec in Syria. It has been one of the mysteries of the ages how it was that the great blocks of granite used in building the Pyramids were ever raised up to the heights and swung into the positions they now occupy. Quite as much of a marvel to the modern thinker is the problem involved in quarrying so enormous a block of stone as the one discovered in Baalbec. This monolith is 69 feet long, 14 feet broad and 17 feet in depth. Its weight is estimated at 15,000 tons. Near by stand the ruins of the ancient Temple of the Sun. It is believed by archaeologists that this huge stone was intended to form part of the building. This supposition is based on the fact that in one of the walls still standing are to be seen great slabs of stone which by actual measurement disclose a length of 63 feet and a height of 13 feet. More wonderful still is the engineering feat which placed them in the position where they are to-day, 19 feet above the level of the ground. No sign of any cementing mixture is to be found anywhere to bind together the stones of this ancient structure. The slabs have been squared so precisely and polished so evenly that it is with difficulty and only after the most careful search that the joining can be found. So perfectly do they fit together that it is impossible to thrust between them even the small blade of a pocket-knife. The beautiful perfection in all the processes involved in the quarrying, preparing of the stone, and the building of these ancient temples leads the scientists still further into wonderment at the quality of the mental and moral equipment of these ancient workmen. No laborer who stopped with his hammer in the air at the stroke of the clock ever hewed these stones. Such conscientious work was only done with love or under the urge of a great religious feeling. So it is that the archaeologists are pondering over another problem—the quality of mind and brain in the man of antiquity.

HAND IN HAND

—OR—

THE LUCKY LEGION

By GASTON GARNE

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER IV (continued)

James faced his father threateningly. The old banker only smiled sneeringly.

"You're a fool!" he said. "You'll cut your own nose off yet. Don't carry me too far. I have plans for your future."

"Indeed!" said the hopeful son, with sarcasm. "What are they?"

"Come into the library, and we'll talk them over."

James obeyed. They were soon seated before a cheery grate fire. The banker settled himself and then began:

"At your age, James, I had already got my start in life. It was a hard pull at first, but I met your mother, and she had money——"

"Which you married her for?"

"Tut-tut! Don't be so sharp of tongue. Well, her money helped us to get rich. Now, it is a very good plan for a young man to marry early in life if he can do so judiciously. You understand?"

James tried to read his father's face.

"Hum!" he said. "I think I see what you are driving at. Have you and old Hiram French been having a talk?"

"Well, no, not exactly," stammered the shrewd banker. "You know Hiram is a peculiar man, and I hardly think you could rope him in on a money basis. But he is not long for this world, and Myrtle French is the greatest heiress around these parts. It would please my declining years to see you succeed in securing the rich prize."

James drew a long, deep breath. His eyes glittered.

"Father," he said, "I'm going to win that girl if I can." The old banker gave a start.

"Oh," he cried joyfully, "a dutiful son. But have you any doubts of success?"

"There is one obstacle," pursued James. "If he can be removed I think I can win hands down."

The gaze of father and son met.

"Who is he?" breathed the banker, softly.

"His name is Roger Benton."

"What! Howard Benton's boy? Why, they're almost town paupers. Impossible, boy. The girl could never look with favor upon that young cub."

"Don't you be deceived," said James. "They're as thick as a mud pie. I tell you girls are queer. But I hate that Roger Benton, and I mean to put him in the gutter. It is the one ambition of my life to defeat him. I hate him."

The malevolence of James' words struck a chill even to the heart of his father. He drummed upon the arm of his chair softly, and finally said:

"My boy, let this matter rest just now. Leave it to me, and I'll see that you have a clear course. We can do nothing more until after the funeral. Good-night."

James Smith went to his slumbers that night convinced that triumph must ultimately become his. With such an ally as his own father, he could not see failure.

Several weeks drifted by.

Neither James Smith nor his father affected mourning for the dead wife and mother. The banker went to his office regularly, and after a few days James appeared at the club, though in a sullen mood.

Meanwhile Roger Benton had made all preparations for the harvesting of his fruit crop.

Fortunately fruits were high in the market, and the prospect was good for a neat profit. Both Roger and his mother looked forward to a happy winter of ease, assured by a neat sum in the bank.

Pears and peaches, grapes and plums hung in profusion from Roger's trees and vines. He had already secured his pickers. Everything was ready for the harvest.

On the morrow the picking was to begin. Roger sat with his mother in the little sitting-room of their neat, though humble home. Mrs. Benton was knitting, and Roger sat gazing into the red coals of the fire. In them he saw wonderful castles and pictures, and as is the case with youth, he indulged in fanciful plans and hopes for the future.

"Mother," he said, suddenly, "would it not be fine for me to strike some new enterprise and make a fortune?"

"A contented mind is better than great riches," quoted Mrs. Benton.

"Oh, I would not care for too large a fortune. But enough to feel that we are secure from want, and that you will be amply provided for all your life. It worries me at times, for fear our poverty may bring suffering to my dear mother."

Tears filled Mrs. Benton's eyes.

"That is a very kind and thoughtful sentiment, my boy," she said. "But I am very near the close of life, and it matters little to me so long as I can see a future for you. It is my dream to see you happily settled for life."

"That is what you are always saying, mother," declared Roger. "You never think of yourself. Oh, if I dared

to leave you, I would go to the Klondike and try to dig a fortune out of the mines."

"I think you will succeed better right at home," began Mrs. Benton. "The perils of such a life—ah, there is the door-bell."

The ting-a-ling of the bell brought Roger to his feet. He glanced at the clock, and saw that it was half-past eight.

"I wonder who that can be?" he asked, in surprise. "Let us see."

He went quickly to the door. It was very dark outside, but as he held the lamp up over his head he saw a muffled figure on the steps. It was McIntyre, Mr. French's coachman. He touched his cap respectfully and said:

"A note for you, sir, from Mr. French."

Roger took the missive with a thrill of surprise. What message could Hiram French be sending him at this time? But McIntyre was gone, and he closed the door and went back into the house.

Roger announced to his mother the fact that the letter was from Mr. French, and then breaking the seal, read:

"DEAR ROGER:

"I have been thinking about you much lately, and feel sure that you are the right man for a certain lucrative position which it is in my power to procure for you. Mr. Vine, the former paymaster of the Moscupic Mills, is dead, as you know, and we must appoint a successor. The directors meet to-morrow night. If you will come to the office to-morrow afternoon I will talk with you and we will fix the matter up satisfactorily, providing you will care to accept the position. The salary is fifteen hundred per year.

"Faithfully your friend,
HIRAM FRENCH."

For a moment after reading this Roger could hardly believe his senses. It seemed like a dream. He stared at his mother, who had begun quietly to weep.

"Great Scott!" Roger finally exclaimed. "Think of that, mother! Fifteen hundred a year! Why, we are sure to get rich. And this from Mr. French? What luck! Hooray!"

In his exuberance Roger turned a hand-spring on the carpet. Then he read the letter again and again. There was no mistake. The offer was there in black and white.

No more uncertainty in the growing of fruits; a fixed income and easier earned. Surely the future was bright. Roger discussed the matter happily with his mother and was thus engaged when suddenly the door-bell rang again.

This time as Roger opened the door, he recognized the visitor.

Fred Fair it was, the secretary of the Hand-in-Hand. "I'm glad to see you!"

Fred Fair it was. The secretary of the Hand-in-Hand Club. He stepped into the hallway, and to Roger's surprise he saw that his chum was deathly pale and trembling. He breathed heavily, and had apparently been running fast. Astonished beyond measure, Roger led the way to the inner room.

But Fred paused, saying in a hoarse undertone:

"I can't stop, Roger. Oh, I have very bad news for you."

"Bad news?" ejaculated Roger. "What has happened, Fred?"

Then incoherently Fred told his story:

"I just came by the corner out here," he said, "and as I did so a queer sound from your fruit garden came to my ears. I turned into the lane and looked through the hedge—and—oh, Roger! I'm sorry for you! But a gang of toughs—I don't know who they can be—were tearing up the vines and cutting down the trees. I fear they have ruined all the fruit."

Roger heard this with whitening and angry face. Mrs. Benton sprang up with a little scream of pain and despair.

"Roger," she began. "Don't go—"

But it was too late. Roger had dashed through the door and into the darkness. In vain Fred tried to call him back.

"Don't go down there alone, Roger," he cried. "I'll call help! I'll find the constable and he will arrest the vandals. Come back!"

But Roger had vanished in the darkness. Fred started after him. He heard a distant shout, the sound of blows, a cry of pain, and then all was still.

CHAPTER V.

SMITH, SENIOR, SHOWS HIS HAND.

Roger had acted wholly upon impulse in dashing so boldly into the garden. His one thought was to arrest the vandals in their destructive work. He thought not of danger, but wholly of what it meant to him to lose the products of his hard summer's work.

In that moment he could not conceive the motives of the unknown toughs. They might be actuated by the wantonness of a drunken spree, or possible malice toward him. He could think of no enemy mean enough to do such a thing.

As he dashed among the trees he saw several dark forms rushing for the farther fence. He also saw dimly in the gloom that vines were uprooted, trees were sawed and broken down, and the garden was in a general state of ruin.

It angered him greatly and he was bound to learn the identity of the wrongdoers and to visit punishment upon them. So he dashed toward them, shouting:

"Hold, you rascals! What do you mean by this trespass? You shall pay for this. Stop, I say!"

Roger grasped at the collar of one of them. He gave the fellow a pull, and saw in that instant that he was masked. This was proof that the deed was entirely pre-meditated.

A deep oath smote upon his ears, and the vandal attempted to escape. Roger hung to him, however, and might have effected his capture, but for the others, who were three in number.

"Help! he's too strong for me!" hoarsely cried the fellow.

"I'll make it warm for you!" cried Roger furiously. "I think I know who you are. You might as well give up!"

(To be continued.)

FACTS WORTH READING

ALASKA VOLCANOES ACTIVE.

All the volcanoes along the Alaska peninsula and adjacent islands, as far to the westward as Unimak Pass, are in eruption, emitting flames and dense volumes of smoke. News of their activity was brought by the mail steamer Dora, which arrived recently from her monthly voyage to Dutch Harbor.

Mount Shishaldi, on Unimak Island, was shooting flames high into the air and Mounts Pavlof and McCushion were smoking when the steamer passed them. Mount Katmai, which was in violent eruption just a year ago, and covered fertile Kodiak Island with a thick layer of ashes, is sending up a great column of smoke, filling the heavens with a haze discernible at Seward.

Volcanoes on the west side of Cook Inlet are showing unusual signs of activity, smoke in great volume pouring out of their craters.

OPENING PACIFIC END OF PANAMA CANAL.

The dike south of the Miraflores lock, which has kept the waters of Ancon Harbor out of the Panama Canal during excavation, was destroyed by a blast of 32,750 pounds of dynamite on May 18. This let the waters of the Pacific into the canal. It was originally planned to continue the excavation back of the dike with steam shovels, but as the dredges at the Pacific entrance had practically completed their work they were available for operation in the canal then. As excavation with dredges is more expeditious than steam-shovel work, this will make for increased progress. Although the canal will not be officially opened until January 1, 1915, it is probable that ships will be able to make the passage through it early this fall. The only element of uncertainty is due to the slides at Culebra. Were it not for these slides there would now be only a million and a half cubic yards to be taken out of the cut instead of six and one half million cubic yards.

MAKING SOLDIERS BY THREATS.

The anti-recruiting campaign in Ireland, which attracted so much public attention a year or two back, is once more showing indications of a vigorous revival.

Its protagonists allege that recruiting officers have found allies among the directors and other heads of big industrial establishments throughout the country who insist on young men joining the army under threat of dismissal if they refuse.

To meet this, the "anti-recruiters" have set themselves the task of looking around for suitable employment for such men, and as if to give generous publicity to the methods employed, the following advertisement is appearing in a Dublin weekly paper: "Two Irish youths have been informed that unless they join the British army their employment will cease. Can any reader get them an honest job?"

An employment agency is now added to the other activities of the Anti-Recruiting Association, and it is asserted that in less than a month no fewer than 350 youths

in the city of Dublin alone registered their names sooner than listen to the blandishments of the British recruiting officer.

MILWAUKEE WOMAN REWARDED BY \$15,000.

For fifteen years Mrs. Nellie Cousins told her fortune with cards, never losing confidence in their efficacy. For fifteen years she went about her employment in stores in order to help her husband maintain their little home.

At night after her work was cleared away she went back to the faithful old deck of cards. Sometimes the cards ran good for her, sometimes not. But when she turned up the five and ten of diamonds six times in succession Sunday night she was overjoyed.

"Our fortune is going to change," she told her husband. "I know it is. The cards tell me so and the cards do not lie."

Confirmation was not long delayed. A special delivery carrier came knocking at her door Monday morning. Mrs. Cousins took the letter. It told her she was heir to the \$15,000 estate of Mrs. Carrie Drexel, Philadelphia, an aunt.

Mrs. Cousins, who is 60 years old, had not heard from her aunt in fifteen years. She put the letter aside and went to her work at Lefly's. She finished out the week there despite the fact that the fortune is enough to keep her in comfort the rest of her life.

THE SECRET OF ARTIFICIAL PEARLS.

As the real pearl comes from the oyster, so to a large extent is the manufacture of artificial pearls dependent on a certain species of fish. The complete processes are, of course, trade secrets, but it is of interest to note that it is from the brilliant scales of the ablet, or blay, that essence d'Orient is produced, and it is with this essence that imitation pearls are manufactured.

The blay is described as "a small fish with a green back and a white belly," and the essence is obtained exclusively from the white scales, which are covered with a pigment of metallic appearance. They are first treated with ammonia and then with fish glue, a powder being first obtained and then a paste which can be easily spread on glass.

In the early stages of manufacture, about 1656, the essence d'Orient was applied to little balls of plaster, but the temperature and damp heat of the human body modified the adhesive qualities of the pearly matter and caused changes of color. It was in 1680 that a Parisian, named Jacquin, invented a method of covering small glass balls with the same essence d'Orient, thus producing the first practical artificial pearls.

In the north and east of France, and in Germany, blay fishing is actively pursued. About 4,000 are required to produce a pound of scales, which in turn gives a quarter of a pound of the essence. The price of the scales varies between \$1.75 and \$2.10 a pound.

MARK, THE MONEY MAKER

—OR—

HOW A SMART BOY GOT RICH

By ED KING

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER VIII (continued)

"I am glad I was able to do so," said Mark. "Now let us see if we cannot put matters to rights."

But the off horse was a mile or more down the road. Little could be done until he was brought back.

So the coachman started after him. The other horse was tethered to a tree. Gertrude leaped out of the carriage.

"You are going to Westvale, Mark?" she asked.

"Yes," replied Mark. "But I will wait here now until I see you put to rights."

"Indeed you will not," said Gertrude, warmly. "I am going back to Westvale, too. Andrew, when you catch the other horse, take the team home. I am going to walk back."

"Walk!" ejaculated Mark. "Are you equal to the task?"

"I hope I have a better opinion of my athletic powers than that," said Gertrude, severely. "Besides, shall I not have the inspiration of your company?"

Mark blushed to the roots of his hair. But he managed to make a gallant reply. Then they started for Westvale.

They chatted gaily as they walked through the wooded road. Gertrude seemed to be in high spirits. As for Mark, he was walking on air.

Suddenly Gertrude's manner changed.

"Oh, I fear I have not been considerate," she said, gravely. "I have watched your career with interest, Mark, and I want to congratulate you on your success in life."

"I thank you deeply," replied Mark. "That is very kind of you."

"I only wish I were able to do the same."

Mark was astonished.

"You?" he gasped. "You do not need to."

"Ah, you do not know all," said the young girl, seriously. "Of course I live in the midst of wealth. But that does not bring me happiness, Mark. You must know that Mr. May is not my true father. I am an orphan as well as you. Oh, you cannot know what my life is in that house. When Jack is at home he makes it unbearable for me. I—I wish I could run away and leave it all."

There was a choking intonation in her voice.

Mark's bosom swelled and his veins tingled as if on fire. Youth depends on impulse.

"If he dares to insult you again," gritted Mark, "I'll do him dreadful injury."

"No, no!" protested Gertrude. "There must be no more trouble. But I have already made up my mind what to do. I am now of age, being eighteen. I shall ask Mr. May for my freedom."

CHAPTER IX.

A SUCCESSFUL PROJECT.

All this was a surprise to Mark. But in that instant it bred in his mind a delicious hope.

He stopped and faced the young girl. For a moment they looked deep into each other's eyes.

"Gertrude," said Mark, earnestly, "I want to ask you a question. Do you like me?"

She looked at him steadily.

"I have always liked you, Mark."

"That settles it," cried the young financier. "You are mine."

Now it was Gertrude's turn to blush. She averted her gaze and said coyly:

"Don't be so sure of that, Mark Morton."

"I was never so sure of anything in my life," declared Mark. "I tell you, Gertrude, if you will only wait for me, we will be married some day—"

"Oh, Mark! You must not talk to me that way."

Mark laughed and stole a kiss. His life's happiness was sealed from that moment. Plans for the future were now discussed by the young people all the way home.

"Remember, you are engaged to me," said Mark, as they parted. "Of course we are too young to marry yet. But when I have made my fortune and the right time comes you will be mine."

And she said shyly:

"Yes."

Thus a new era dawned in Mark Morton's life. But he little dreamed of the complications and thrilling experiences which this compact was to entail.

It chanced that the bushes by the roadside concealed a crouching figure. Keen eyes had watched them and a foe had dogged their footsteps.

It was Dick Stevens.

The young villain lost not a moment's time in taking the story to Mr. May.

The banker's eyes gleamed balefully as he listened.

"Dick," he said, "remember never to tell any one else of this. I see now my chance to humble the pride of that young insolent cub, and I'll do it."

The next week Jack May returned from his European tour. For some days he was seen little upon the street.

Mr. May had decided to put Jack at once into business.

"Show the people that young Morton cannot claim all the credit for enterprise in this town," he said. "Go ahead and make a record. I will give you plenty of capital."

Young May caught at the idea. It seemed to him a brilliant plan to eclipse Mark Morton.

And it seemed easy, too, with plenty of capital to work with.

"I have the idea," he declared. "I'll cut out his beggarly ferry. I'll build a horse railroad around the end of the lake to Hazlewood. Then I'll cut down the fare and ruin his ferry trade."

"A fine plan," agreed Mr. May. "I'll back you up in the scheme."

At once the young reprobate began to lay his plans. In a few days he had completed the survey.

Then weeks were employed in securing the necessary franchise. Right of way was gained and the railroad was begun.

Of course this move created some excitement and much comment in the town.

But the Hazlewood people universally declared that they should always patronize the ferry, even at greater fare, for the trip would be shorter.

Mark lay low and waited. He knew that from this moment he would have to fight the millions of Joseph May.

But there are articles which money cannot buy, and things which it cannot accomplish. Mark was determined to keep his ferry running just as long as it paid him to do so.

If it ceased to pay, then he would put his boat out of commission and sell it and get into something else.

He had now quite a comfortable bank account. It would keep him from want for many a day.

But men of business judgment declared that May's horse railroad was a gigantic bit of folly.

They claimed that people would never patronize it, as it would take so much longer to make the trip. However, this remained to be seen.

Mark kept his own counsel. He kept out of the way of the Mays and attended strictly to his business.

He improved every opportunity to see Gertrude. But suddenly she dropped out of sight.

The report went forth that she had been sent away to a classical school by Mr. May. Mark was not at all satisfied with the explanation. He did not dream that their understanding was known to Mr. May.

Finally the horse railroad was completed. The last spike was driven and the cars began to run.

Now it became a matter of chagrin to the Mays that nobody patronized them.

Mark doubled the trips of his ferry, and everybody still continued to travel on the boat.

Scarce a score of passengers a day were carried on the horse railroad. It was a distressing state of affairs.

The expense of operating the railroad was tremendous. After the first week Mr. May was compelled to meet a stunning deficit.

Inducements were offered to the people. Everything possible was done. But all in vain.

The horse railroad proved an ill-advised project. After several weeks of outgo, Mr. May saw that the thing would ruin him if continued.

Then followed recriminations between father and son. Jack called his father some opprobrious names and went on a fearful spree. The horse railroad fell into disuse.

It was a hard blow to Joseph May. Very discreetly Mark refused to make comment or discuss the matter in public. He kept assiduously at his business.

May grew sullen and taciturn. He was determined to effect the ruin of Mark Morton at any cost.

And it happened that Mark now met with a reverse which came near proving his end, as well as his financial ruin.

CHAPTER X.

AN ADVERSE SIDE.

Mark's policy of refusing to discuss his rival and his projects was in good taste and judgment.

He won the good opinion of the public. People looked upon him as a youth of sound character and nobility of purpose.

Mr. May's horse railroad scheme had proved a terrible boomerang.

He was mortified and humiliated. But shame never once came to him. He was more determined than ever to effect Mark Morton's ruin.

At this juncture, however, and before he could perfect another scheme, his dutiful son took time by the forelock and forestalled him.

The Scud did not make trips after eleven o'clock at night.

Captain Carter then tied her up at the wharf and sought his home, as did the crew.

Two watchmen, however, were kept on her deck. One night a man came hastily to the steamer and informed Jim Munro, one of the watchmen, that he was needed at home, as his wife was at the point of death.

This left only John Schmidt, a faithful German, on the deck. While John, however, was trying to cover the whole vessel alone, a terrible thing occurred.

A belated pedestrian on the shore suddenly hailed the boat.

"I say, watch, your boat is on fire!"

"Vat ish dot?" cried the German watchman, in surprise. "I see no fire aboudt it."

"Well, if you go aft and look over the rail you'll see it coming through an open port," cried his informant.

"Heavens! Vat shall I do?" cried the terrified German. "I cannot leave here to get dot fire department."

The man on shore agreed to give the alarm. Smoke was bursting up through the deck now.

A few moments later the Westvale fire department came rushing down to the spot.

The fire bells alarmed the town. In fact, Mark was one of the first on the scene.

The firemen did their best, but the staunch boat was doomed. She burned to the water's edge and became a total wreck.

The next morning Hazlewood people were compelled to patronize the horse-cars.

The fire was easily proved to be the work of incendiaries.

The message brought Jim Munro was a fake, and merely employed to get him out of the way.

(To be continued.)

FROM ALL POINTS

Comanche, a 2,000-pound buffalo bull, rated by Professor William T. Hornaday, president of the American Bison Society, as the finest specimen of the breed, was killed in a battle with a younger rival for the supremacy of Colonel Trexler's herd at Schencksville, Pa. The victor, Roaring Frank, was a much smaller animal, weighing only about 1,400 pounds. He was spryer than the older bull, however, and succeeded in goring him the length of his horn three times.

The newest diamond field is in the Kasai River district, Belgian Congo, West Africa. The famous De Beers group of mines at Kimberly, South Africa, have heretofore furnished 95 per cent. of the world's diamond supply. Their annual output is about \$44,000,000, and since their discovery in 1867 they have produced \$600,000,000 worth of diamonds. The remaining 5 or 6 per cent. of the world's supply has come from India, Brazil, Borneo and Australia. There are many diamond occurrences in the United States, but none so far of any importance or commercial consequence.

An official of the Wells Fargo Express Company stated recently that the gross business of all the express companies has not been so adversely affected by the parcel post as has been generally supposed. He said that his own company's gross business would be close to what it was a year ago, and that the net earnings would be so well maintained that stockholders need expect no reduction in dividends. In telling why the express business has kept up despite government competition this official said that the loss in small package business was practically offset by gains in business not handled by the Postoffice Department.

The races of mankind are five in number—white, yellow, brown, red and black, or the Caucasian, Mongolian, Malayan, Indian and negro. The interrelationships of these different breeds have been the subject of study with the specialists for ages, but the disputes are as numerous as they were when the study began. Whether the various races sprang from some one original race and if so what that original race was is a question that is still in limbo. Between these five races, as found at present, there are physical, moral and mental differences so marked as to seem to preclude a common origin, and yet, unless such origin is assumed, the difficulty of the case is greatly enhanced. Race origins are an unsolved problem.

The sum of \$150,000 was paid the other day by the government of Argentina for the horse Craganour, which was first past the winning post in the Derby, but which was disqualified for bumping. The condition was made that his owner, C. Bower Ismay, should not permit him to race again. Only on four occasions has the price paid for Craganour, which is to be used for breeding purposes in Argentina, been exceeded in the amount paid for a race-horse. These were Ormonde, which was sold for \$156,250 to an American sportsman; Cyllene, which went to an

English sportsman for \$157,500; Diamond Jubilee, sold to an Argentine breeder for \$157,500, and Flying Fox, which holds the record for price and was sold to a French sportsman for \$196,875.

Male employees who have attained the age of 60, after 20 years of continuous service, and female workers reaching 55, will become eligible for pensions under a system which the Otis Elevator Company is to inaugurate in its plants in Yonkers, Buffalo, Harrison, N. J., and the West, about 9,000 in all. Campbell Scott, manager of the Yonkers plant, said that it would be several weeks before the details were worked out and the first pensions paid. They will be based on the average annual salary for the last 10 years, 1 per cent being allowed for each year of service. Death and disability benefits also will be provided. One Yonkers employee, who is sure of a pension, is Henry Boyd. He is 76 years old and has been with the concern 57 years. There are about 1,700 men and women in the Yonkers works.

The wandering acrobats of India are recruited from a low caste of people called Dombaranos, who live by this profession alone. The children are trained from their earliest childhood and do not receive any education in schools. They travel from village to town and give their performances, which are really wonderful, in the open air before crowds of onlookers. Their tricks are quaint and sometimes astonishingly clever. Supported by one another, these men will balance themselves in a crazy kind of pyramid rising 15 or 20 feet from the ground, and one of their number will then climb this living pyramid with a heavy weight in his teeth. Babies not yet able to walk are often seen being made use of in the most dangerous manner during these performances. Rajah and rich Indians are very fond of the acrobatic displays and engage the best of the men to perform before their guests at entertainments.

Local churches, here and there, have used the moving picture machine as an aid to a popular service, but the Presbyterians are the first to make it a part of general church work. Through an arrangement with a company, the Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sunday-school Work is prepared to introduce moving picture machines into Sunday-schools throughout the country. If rightly used, and there is every reason that it will be under such direction, the moving picture will become a powerful ally in telling the story of the Bible and in impressing religious truth. The Bible being an Eastern book, its scenes, people and customs are more or less strange to the average child. For clearing up dark places nothing excels a truthful picture, and to this the moving-picture story adds a strong dramatic interest, especially those of the Kinemacolor Co., which reproduces the pictures in color. The day may not be far distant when moving pictures will be a part of public school instruction. Sunday-schools have generally been supposed to be behind the times in their methods, but in this instance at least they have scored over the day schools.

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BRIEF BUT POINTED ITEMS

A firm in England has invented an illuminating varnish called "Lumino Aluminum Paint," and it is stated that the glow of the paint on a dark night is so bright on an automobile that the car is visible for two miles, without being fitted with lamps. People on the roads near the factory at first were much frightened by the strangely lightless cars, which silently skimmed through the village.

Representative Frank B. Willis, of Ohio, is the champion speller of the national capital. Under the guidance of Schoolmaster David F. Houston, Secretary of Agriculture, and in the presence of President Wilson, he spelled down two picked teams of legislators and newspaper men at the old-fashioned spelling bee, the feature of the ladies' night of the National Press Club. Representative Willis was hard pressed by Senator Poindexter, who went down to defeat on "hydrocephalus." Representative Willis admitted afterward he did not know how to spell it.

Two Austrian watchmakers have built a clock which receives its motive power from a current of air blowing upon a turbine-shaped wheel. The clock is so simply built that the current of air produced by a stove or kitchen range is sufficient to make it go. The air is brought to the clock by a pipe fixed upon the wall. A very strong current is reduced by a certain clever contrivance which regulates the speed of the works. This clock serves at the same time as a ventilator. The one built as a sample is installed in a restaurant at Unymarkt and works satisfactorily.

One of the most remarkable instances of long life was that of the Countess of Desmond. This merry widow died in 1694, having survived her husband, the twelfth earl, 70 years. She retained her faculties to the last, could walk ten miles daily until within a week of her death, at the age of 140, and according to the inscription on her portrait at Muckross Abbey, Killarney, "in ye course of her pilgrimage renewed her teeth twice." The countess appeared to beat all records for longevity, when relates Sir William Temple, "she must needs climb a nut tree to gather nuts; so, falling down she hurt her thigh, which brought on a fever, and that brought death."

Irwin J. Kiellberg, a sailor on board the United States ship Celtic, recently lying at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, is in a serious condition at the Dobbs Ferry Hospital as the result of a snake bite the other afternoon at Fair View Grove on the Hudson. The doctors attending him say he may not recover. Kiellberg was one of the excursionists who went to Fair View Grove recently with the German Lutheran Sunday school of Brooklyn. With others he went up the Palisades during the afternoon. While walking through some grass Kiellberg was bitten on the ankle by a large snake. He tried to kill the reptile, but it got away. It was with difficulty that his companions got him down the Palisades. The doctors operated immediately.

JOKES AND JESTS.

"Mike, I am going to make you a present of this pig."
"Ah, sure, an' 'tis just like you, sir."

"Ma has solved the servant girl problem." "That so?"
"Yes. She's decided to do the work herself."

"Will you take off one of your shoes for a minute, Miss Sereun?" "What in the world for, Johnnie?" "Mamma said you was getting crow's feet somethin' awful."

"Why do you encourage your husband to drink so much coffee?" "It's the one thing that will keep him awake nights, and that's the only chance I get to tell him what I really think of him."

"Them pesky suffragettes wants everything nowadays," growled Farmer Brown, peering over the Morning Star. "Yes," replied his meek spouse. "I heered Deacon Applegate say last Sunday that soon they'd be sayin' 'Awomen' at the end of a prayer."

The young physician, who was working for the city and doing good among the poor, was called to examine a little Hebrew boy. The doctor tried to be as gentle and kind as possible. Finally, in order to make the boy forget his troubles, he asked "Are you ticklish?" "No," answered the boy. "Yiddish."

"Sorry, Brown," said the doctor after the examination. "You're in a very serious condition. I'm afraid I'll have to operate on you." "Operate!" gasped Brown. "Why, I haven't the money for operations. I'm only a poor working man." "You're insured, are you not?" "Yes, but I don't get that until after I'm dead." "Oh, that'll be all right," said the doctor, consolingly.

"Well, Silas, after you have scrimped and saved and denied yourself a lot of things you'd naturally like to have, to send your boy Gus through college, are you satisfied with the results?" asked the visitor. "Ye bet I be," said the old man. "He learned something, did he?" "Ye betcha," smiled the old man. "I set Gus down in the cornfield durin' his last summer's vacation, and what with his clo'es an' his college yell they warn't a dodgasted crow dast come near the place all summer."

A WOMAN OF NERVE.

By Col. Ralph Fenton.

The following episode in the career of the celebrated Madame Vestria happened in the winter of 1847, when the star of her genius was still in the ascendant, in spite of her fifty years.

She had married the famous Charles Mathews the younger only a short time before, and was visiting Paris in his company.

The chief object of their visit was to secure a ballet troupe for a spectacle, the preparations for which were then in progress at one of the large London theaters at the time under their united management.

But it so chanced that the selection of the ballet fell principally upon Mathews, because his wife was temporarily disabled by an unlucky sprain of the ankle.

She was confined to their hotel in the Rue Sainte Honore, where, of course, she could console herself by giving receptions to her admirers, who were quite as numerous in France as in England.

One evening she was alone in the small but elegant salon adjoining her apartment.

Her waiting-maids were within call, and could now and then hear from one of the further rooms the playful bark of her King Charles spaniels, Flock and Floss, which always accompanied her on her travels.

Taking up a newspaper, her attention became absorbed by the first article on which her glance alighted; for it was upon a subject that had excited all Paris for a number of days.

A number of robberies had taken place in quick succession, whose perpetrator had not been discovered.

It was evident, from certain characteristics common to all the crimes, that they were the work of one man.

His favorite, and indeed only method, had been to secrete himself in close proximity to some fashionable and wealthy lady's sleeping apartment, and then to possess himself of her jewels and other valuables after she had fallen asleep. When his victim happened to awake he had not hesitated to use violence to prevent her giving an alarm.

The only clew to the villain as yet lay in the knowledge that he had but two fingers on his left hand, a circumstance that had been noted by one lady who had had the nerve to simulate unconsciousness while secretly observing his felonious operations in the subdued light of her boudoir.

A panic of fear was said to be existing among such ladies as were noted for the number and value of their jewels, and sarcastic comments were passed upon the ineffectiveness of the police authorities.

Madame Vestris was a woman of exceptionally strong nerve, but she could not restrain a little timorous thrill when, having finished the article, she limped across the salon to the door of her boudoir, intending to summon her maids and retire for the night.

Before entering her boudoir, however, she turned to extinguish the wax lights of a candelabra that had been left burning in addition to the small, shaded lamp by which she had been reading.

The candelabra stood upon a bracket, and cast a strong,

mellow light upon the floor, throwing out the shadows of the intervening pieces of furniture, especially of the table at which she had been sitting, in pretty strong relief, inasmuch as the shaded reading lamp in the middle of the table shed its lesser luster in a small, circumscribed circle.

As she cast a final glance over the room, she was suddenly filled with fear on perceiving cast out upon the floor, directly across her footstool, the unmistakable shadow of a man crouching under the table at which she had been sitting.

She remained perfectly quiet, but her terror was increased a hundredfold as she saw, or thought she saw, the image of a hand that possessed only two fingers.

She was convinced that the mysterious criminal, whose deeds had so excited the city, was lying concealed there, and had so lain, probably in contact with the very folds of her dress, the entire evening.

Having come to this conviction, through a swift and dreadful train of reasoning, which every woman understands, Madame Vestris remained for the moment almost petrified.

Her jewels were noted for their splendor and costliness, and she was known to always have them in a casket at her bedside upon retiring; and since her arrival in Paris it had also become pretty well known that she was in the habit of retiring comparatively early, while her husband's duties kept him away from the hotel until a later hour.

Her maids slept at the farther end of an outside corridor, and thus for a considerable time she was virtually alone upon the third floor of the hotel.

Of course, the robber had made himself acquainted with these circumstances, and was waiting his opportunity to enter upon his course of pillage and violence, possibly to end in murder.

These thoughts and conclusions flashed through Madame Vestris' mind with terrible rapidity.

Then, by a tremendous effort of will power, she not only recovered her intrepidity and coolness, but also formed a plan to extricate herself and outwit the villain.

Without extinguishing the lights, she began to carol a light operatic air, while resuming her seat, and touched the silver spring bell on the table with which she was in the habit of summoning one or the other of her maids.

This action alone cost her a great pang of fear, for if the spaniels should accompany the maid, they would doubtless at once sniff out the presence of the concealed robber, who might then attack her without delay.

Fortunately, however, the maid who responded to her call was not accompanied by the dogs, which had romped themselves to sleep in one of the remoter apartments.

"Adele!" said Madame Vestris, "is the establishment of M. Vernac, the jeweler, still open, think you?"

"Oh, yes, madame!" replied the maid. "It is Saturday night, when all the shops keep open until twelve, and it is now but a little after ten."

"I shall then have to get you to take a message to him at once," said the actress. "He has been repairing my costliest diamond necklace and my tiara of sapphires and brilliants, which he promised to return this evening. I shall not sleep without having them at my bedside to-night. Whether repaired or not, he shall send them with you by

one of the clerks. Bring me the writing materials from my boudoir."

Adele did as she was directed, and, still humming her song, Madame Vestris, with a firm hand, penned the following, which she sealed and directed to M. Vernac, the then fashionable jeweler of the Rue des Italiens:

"Monsieur—The two-fingered villain is concealed under the very table at which I write, unsuspicous of my knowledge of his presence. Summon the police, and lose not a moment in hastening to MADAME VESTRIS."

"There!" said the heroic actress, handing the missive to her servant, "that, I fancy, will bring me back my beloved jewels without an hour's delay, and teach M. Vernac a lesson at the same time. Here is some small change, Adele. Take the first siare you find disengaged, and lose no time in returning."

Adele was about quitting the room when her mistress was seized with a sudden horror at the thought of being left alone with the desperado, and she called her back.

"Before you go," said she, with a counterfeited calmness, "tell Marie to come here and keep me company. I will see if she has made any improvement in that embroidery work I tried to teach her in London."

"Alas, madame," said Adele, "Marie took the liberty of going to bed an hour ago."

"The lazy little minx!" cried the lady, laughing. "But no matter, I will amuse myself during your absence by rehearsing my part in the new spectacle."

Adele departed, and Madame Vestris was left alone—alone, save for that terrible presence, whom, perchance, an imprudent movement of her foot beneath the table, or even a tell-tale quaver of her voice, might at any instant awaken into a capacity for evil and murderous purpose.

But she had set herself to play a part such as she had never played before, and nobly did she enact it to the very close.

She recited the lines of her forthcoming role over and over again; she sang, she trilled, she caroled in a manner that would have ravished the ears of thousands; and all to that single deadly, lurking auditor, whose suppressed breathing she fancied she could sometimes detect between the pauses of her voice, and whom she felt to be within a hand's-breadth of her trembling limbs.

During all this enforced gayety she was a prey to such secret and mental anguish as can only be imagined by the most sensitive of womanly natures.

The seconds crept by like minutes, the minutes seemed hours, and at last, when she had pretty thoroughly exhausted her voice, she sank back with a sigh and contented herself with hummimg musically and in a low voice.

Presently, at the end of an hour, though it might well have seemed an eternity to her, her heart gave a great leap as she heard the clatter of wheels in front of the hotel. A moment later Adele entered the room, but with such a sombre look upon her face that her mistress at first feared that her message had miscarried.

But Adele was something of an actress herself, and there were those lightly following her up the staircase who brought the assurance of safety and release.

She was almost instantly followed into the saloon by three police officers, who were in turn not only followed

by M. Vernac, the jeweler, but also by Mr. Mathews, Madame Vestris' husband, who had been picked up at one of the theaters on the way.

As soon as the brave lady saw her husband she uttered an hysterical scream and flew into his arms, with a forgetfulness of her sprained ankle for which she could never afterward account.

At the same instant the officers overturned the table, and then quickly peered upon the concealed ruffian hidden underneath.

He made a desperate resistance, being a powerful ruffian, and armed to the teeth.

But he was overcome after a short struggle, and led away to prison, after the heroic lady had briefly related her story of the detection of his presence and the stratagem by which she had caught him in the toils.

The criminal turned out to be one Dufresne, a galley slave from Toulon.

He had made himself notorious in the south of France before breaking loose from prison and entering upon the series of crime which now fortunately led to the conclusion of his career.

He was a hardened and somewhat original wretch, and is known to have remarked to the officers with much nonchalance:

"I ought to forgive the stratagem by which I was ruined. Pardon! for a whole hour I was the sole auditor of the greatest singer and actress in Europe, who gave herself exceptional trouble to entertain me."

Duncan D. McBean, builder of the Interborough subway tunnel under the Harlem River, recently announced that he would build a roadway tunnel under the Hudson River at a cost of \$1,750,000. This offer was made by Mr. McBean following the announcement recently by Engineer Davies, of the New Jersey Interstate Bridge and Tunnel Commission, that a roadway tunnel from New York to New Jersey will cost from \$10,000,000 to \$11,000,000. In the construction of the Harlem River tunnel Mr. McBean employed a novel method. It consisted of building the tunnel in sections on land and then floating it to its proposed position and sinking it. He proposes to use the same method to build a North River tunnel, if his offer is accepted. "Not only do I offer to build a roadway tunnel between New York and New Jersey at the price I have stated," said Mr. McBean the other day at the Waldorf-Astoria, "but I offer to build a passageway that is almost fourteen feet wider than that used as a basis by the commission's engineers in basing its figures, and which will provide, not only for traffic vehicles, but a line of electric passenger cars. My tunnel can be built on pile foundations, which is preferable to the tunnel favored by the engineers, which lies on soft mud and rises and falls daily with the tides, and it will have a metal shell, protected from corrosion and erosion, with brick laid in asphaltic mastic, preventing action of salt water and destructive gases. It would also have a lining of concrete from three to four feet thick inside its metal shell, instead of a tunnel with no concrete lining, either inside or outside its metal shell. In addition, my tunnel would have its roadway only sixty-five feet below mean high water instead of ninety feet below."

GOOD READING

The British Government has no intention of building a big naval station at Kingston, Jamaica, as a consequence of the completion of the Panama Canal, according to an announcement made by Winston Randolph Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty, recently in the House of Commons, in reply to questions on the subject.

Nearly five years ago, Miss Nora Lee, of Louisville, Ky., threw a tightly corked bottle containing her name and address into the Ohio River. Recently she learned that it had been picked up off San Diego, Cal. It is supposed the bottle passed down the Ohio, into the Mississippi and through the Gulf of Mexico, then across the Atlantic, Indian and Pacific oceans before it was finally washed up on the Pacific Coast.

A new machine, called the stenotype, has been invented, which enables the shorthand writer to get from four hundred to six hundred words a minute upon paper in an absolutely correct and accurate form. The basis of operating the machine is phonetic spelling. It is but a shorthand typewriter. While the work done is virtually the same as done by shorthand it has the advantage of being recorded in plain English characters.

Natural gas as an automobile fuel is being experimented with in West Virginia, where the largest gas wells in America are located. The gas is compressed in seamless tanks, holding from 300 to 2,000 cubic feet, at a cost to the user of about 15 cents per 1,000 cubic feet. A well-known car using natural gas made a mileage of 100 on 25 cents' worth of fuel. The same car consumed 20 cents' worth of gasoline in running 20 miles on the same track.

The largest turbo-generator in the world is being built for the Commonwealth Edison Company of Chicago by the General Electric Company. It is of the horizontal turbine type and will generate 30,000 kilowatts. The over-all length of the machine will be 60.5 feet and it will be 18 feet 4 inches wide by 14 feet high. It will run at 1,500 revolutions per minute. The generator will be a 25-cycle, 3-phase machine with two poles, and the output will be 1,925 amperes per phase with a voltage of 9,000. The total weight of the turbine and generator combined will be about a million pounds.

"There never was a time in our history when the sea-fighting arm of the service was in better condition than at present and additions to the fleets already planned make it certain that we shall be ready for anything at any time." These are the words of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Assistant Secretary of the Navy Department, uttered during his visit to Boston. He added the customary official remark that there was "no danger of war with Japan." "In a sense, this war talk serves a good purpose," he continued, "for our citizens become thereby more familiar with the workings of our army and navy in times of peace."

The North Railroad Company of France uses the Eiffel Tower wireless time signals in setting its station clocks at Amiens and Boulogne and the important center of Rouen. The new system is superior to that of the telegraph, besides it does not temporarily monopolize telegraph lines. Each day at 10:45 A.M. the employee at the small wireless post of the depot receives the tower signal and regulates his clock accordingly. From this clock the other clocks on the premises are regulated. A new portable wireless receiver contained in a small box is specially designed for taking the tower signals; two wires stretched between telegraph poles serve as antennæ.

Officials of the Federal Bureau of Fisheries are awaiting with interest the arrival of a trout taken by the Indians in Iceberg Lake, in Glacier National Park, Montana, which never has been known to exist outside the icy waters of the Polar Sea. Geologists believe that subterranean channels may connect the frozen waters of the Far North with the lakes of the northern United States. While there are several divisions of the trout family in Iceberg Lake and adjacent streams of water, the species that has raised the conjecture is the first of its kind known to have been taken outside of Behring Sea. It is reported to be a splendid specimen, some two feet in length, and it has been preserved for the benefit of the naturalists.

A French inventor has adapted the microphone to the discovery of underground water. One end of a tube is inserted in the ground, the upper end being attached to the microphone. The sound of flowing or dropping water is conveyed to the ear from great depths. In the Marne Valley, France, two springs were recently discovered with this apparatus at a depth of about 50 feet below the surface of the ground. The diving apparatus is one of the latest objects to which the telephone has been applied. A sheet of copper is used in place of one of the glasses in the helmet and to this a telephone is fixed, so that the diver, when at the bottom of the sea, has only to slightly turn his head in order to report what he sees or to receive instructions from above.

There is great satisfaction among all sections of the public over the decision of the new French navy minister, M. Baudin, to ask Parliament for \$100,000,000 to bring the French navy up to the modern standard. He has pointed out that the marine forces of France are now not only far weaker than Germany's, but also in serious danger of being left behind by Italy and Austria-Hungary, France's rivals in the Mediterranean, in view of the ships of these countries now being laid down. In three or four years, it is realized, Italy will have a series of superdreadnoughts of 50,000 tons each, the largest in existence, each with an armament of 10 guns of 38 centimeters. The general feeling is that the necessary credits should be voted immediately by Parliament without haggling, so that not a moment may be lost in the building.

ARTICLES OF ALL KINDS

GOLD STOCKINGS THAT COST \$300 A PAIR.

Fashionable women in Paris think nothing now of buying stockings at \$300 a pair. Some of these stockings are encrusted with the finest lace; others are woven of gold and silver.

Handkerchiefs so finely woven by hand that they are almost transparent and adorned simply with a striped border may be had for the very reasonable price of \$40 a dozen.

The latest novelty is a tiny bulldog carved out of rock crystal or amethyst and meant to decorate an umbrella handle or to be placed as an ornament on the blotter on the writing table. It is sold in a green kennel, under the roof of which is an enameled plaque bearing such names as Flirt, Fanny or Toby.

Fashionable women have also taken to drinking tea extensively, not so much because they are fond of it, but because visits to the tea-rooms, which are now springing up everywhere, give them an opportunity to display their elaborate afternoon frocks. So great is the rush tables have to be ordered in advance.

HOW REAL LIONS WERE USED IN A REALISTIC ARENA SCENE.

In the moving picture production of "Quo Vadis?" is a scene showing a number of lions advancing across a wide arena toward a group of men, women and children representing the early Christian martyrs.

This picture illustrates the advantages the camera has over the eye in the matter of spectacular scenes. It would be impossible to show this scene on the stage, but the camera can so deceive the eye that it is unable to detect between seeming and actual occurrence.

The lions used for the scene belonged to a party of lion tamers, some of whom were in the group of people to be attacked. While some of the tamers drove the lions forward, themselves out of the range of the camera, other tamers stood in the group, ready with revolvers to frighten the beasts. At the critical moment the revolvers were fired, all but one of the lions bolted—the one having to be driven away—the camera was stopped, and the arena cleared. Then dummy bodies were scattered about the arena, the lions were driven to the spot and the camera was set to work again. By dexterously cutting the film and joining it the transition in the picture from the advance of the lions to the death of the victims seemed to the eye so short that it was impossible to detect the actual break, which really occupied some hours. The illusion was made all the more perfect by showing pictures of the audience watching with apparent enjoyment the scenes supposed to be going on in the arena.

MACHINE TO REPLACE STAMP?

Is the postage stamp doomed? It is if a postal innovation hailing from New Zealand, where it has been tried with great success, is generally adopted by the postal authorities of the world. In the future, instead of buying

postage stamps, "licking" or otherwise moistening the gum on their backs and applying sufficient pressure to cause adherence, all we may need to do will be to put our letters under a machine and turn a crank.

The machine, which in New Zealand is rented from the postal authorities, records the amount stamped, just like a gas meter, and payment is made to a collector, who calls at intervals. It gives impressions of half penny, one, three and six pence and one shilling, and as each impression is made its value is automatically recorded on a set of dials at the top of the machine.

On the front of the machine is an indicator handle, which is set by the operator to show the value of the postage required. On the right hand side is an operating handle, with a trigger attached to it.

At the bottom is an opening in which the matter to be stamped is inserted. When this is done, the operating handle is pushed around until a complete circle has been made, when it is automatically locked. At the same time the value of the impression taken is added to the total recorded by the dials shown at the top of the machine.

At present the machine is only manufactured for using impressions of the British coinage values, but all the parts for altering to the decimal coinage of any nation have already been prepared, so that it would be possible to supply them to any other nation on very short notice.

DURABILITY OF ROMAN WALLS.

Twenty square feet of the Roman wall at Caerwent, England, was demolished recently by a natural movement of the soil. An accident of this kind seems to be the only thing that in the natural course of events can really damage a Roman wall, of which there are several hundred miles still standing in England. The secret of their permanence is the cement. We do not know the method of its composition, but it is far sounder than any modern cement. Indeed, when some part of such a wall as that mentioned has to be dislodged it is necessary to use dynamite.

All that we know of Roman cement is that pounded tile forms a considerable element in it. For the rest, Roman walls were built with stone and tile from a cement bottom.

The finest specimen in England is the wall that crosses Northumberland from about Newcastle to Carlisle, keeping along the ridges of a series of small hills that fall sheer to the north. The facing of this wall is still in admirable preservation in most parts, and where the hewn stone has broken away one can see the interior mass of rubble and cement.

The Caerwent fall seems to have been the breaking away of a length of the facing. One may practically say that Roman walls are absolutely enduring, except for the slipping of the subsoil. Nothing touches the cement; it is harder than the stone itself, as a rule. But when the subsoil becomes moist and loosens, disasters to the walls are natural accidents.

ITCH POWDER.

Gee whiz! What fun you can have with this stuff. Moisten the tip of your finger, tap it on the contents of the box, and a little bit will stick. Then shake hands with your friend, or drop a speck down his back. In a minute he will feel as if he had the seven years' itch. It

will make him scratch, roar, squirm and make faces. But it is perfectly harmless, as it is made from the seeds of wild roses. The horrible itch stops in a few minutes, or can be checked immediately by rubbing the spot with a wet cloth. While it is working, you will be apt to laugh your suspender buttons off. The best joke of all. Price 10 cents a box, by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

GOOD LUCK BANKS.

Ornamental as well as useful. Made of highly nickelized brass. It holds just One Dollar. When filled it opens itself. Remains locked until refilled. Can be used as a watchcharm. Money refunded if not satisfied. Price, 10c. by mail.

L. Senarens, 347 Winthrop St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

CACHOO OR SNEEZING POWDER.

The greatest fun-maker of them all. A small amount of this powder, when blown in a room, will cause everyone to sneeze without anyone knowing where it comes from. It is very light, will float in the air for some time, and penetrate every neck and corner of a room. It is perfectly harmless. Cachoo is put up in bottles, and one bottle contains enough to be used from 10 to 15 times. Price, by mail, 10c. each; 3 for 25c. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

X-RAY WONDER

This is a wonderful little optical illusion. In use, you apparently see the bones in your hand, the hole in a pipe-stem, the lead in a pencil, etc. The principle on which it is operated cannot be disclosed here, but it will afford no end of fun for any person who has one. Price, 15 cents each, by mail, postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

THE SWIMMING FISH

Here is a fine mechanical toy. It is an imitation goldfish, about 4½ inches long, and contains a water-tight compartment which will not allow it to sink. To keep it in a natural position, the lower fin is ballasted with lead. To make it work, a spring is wound up. You then throw it in the water, and the machinery inside causes the tail to wiggle, and propel it in the most lifelike manner. When it runs down the fish floats until it is recovered, and it can then be rewound. Races between two of these fisher are very interesting. Price, 25 cents each by mail, postpaid.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

LAUGHABLE EGG TRICK

This is the funniest trick ever exhibited and always produces roars of laughter. The performer says to the audience that he requires some eggs for one of his experiments. As no spectator carries any, he calls his assistant, taps him on top of the head, he gags, and an egg comes out of his mouth. This is repeated until six eggs are produced. It is an easy trick to perform, once you know how, and always makes a hit. Directions given for working it. Price, 25 cents by mail, postpaid.

N. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

CARTER AEROPLANE No. 1.

Will fly on a horizontal line 150 feet! Can be flown in the house, and will not injure itself nor anything in the room. The most perfect little aeroplane made. The motive power is furnished by twisted rubber bands contained within the tubular body of the machine. It is actuated by a propeller at each end revolving in opposite directions. Variation in height may be obtained by moving the planes and the balance weight. It can be made to fly either to the right or the left by moving the balance sideways before it is released for flight. Price, 35c. each, delivered.

L. Senarens, 347 Winthrop St., Brooklyn, N. Y.



a propeller at each end revolving in opposite directions. Variation in height may be obtained by moving the planes and the balance weight. It can be made to fly either to the right or the left by moving the balance sideways before it is released for flight. Price, 35c. each, delivered.

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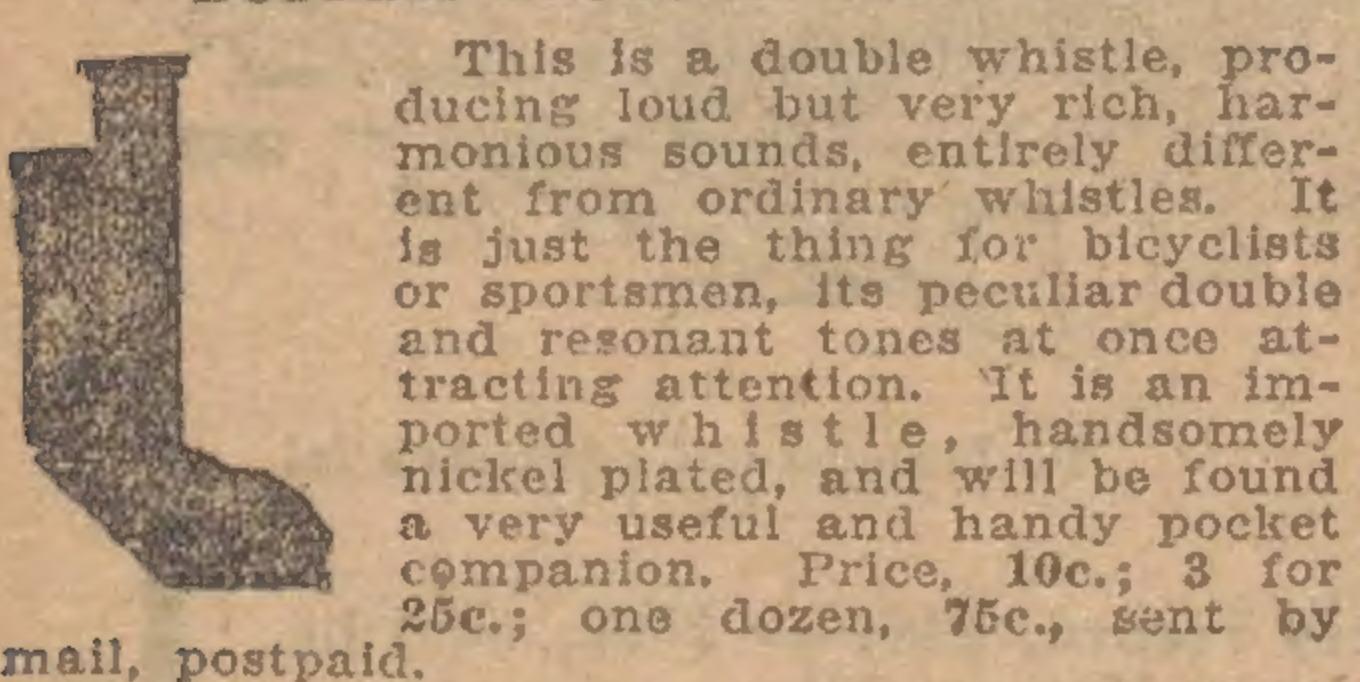
LITTLE RIP'S TEN-PINS.



In each set there are ten pins and two bowling balls, packed in a beautifully ornamented box. With one of these miniature sets you can play ten-pins on your dining-room table just as well as the game can be played in a regular alley. Every game known to professional bowlers can be worked with these pins. Price, 10c. per box by mail, postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

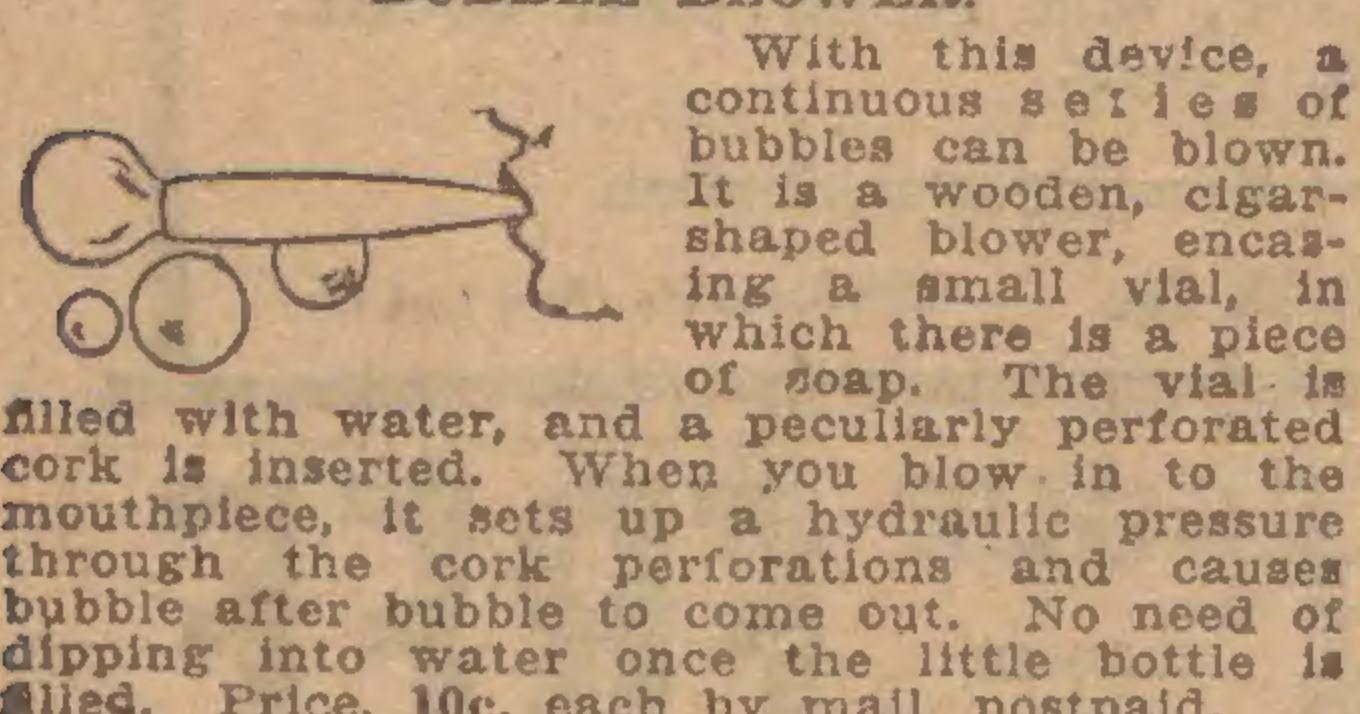
DUPLEX BICYCLE WHISTLE.



This is a double whistle, producing loud but very rich, harmonious sounds, entirely different from ordinary whistles. It is just the thing for bicyclists or sportsmen, its peculiar double and resonant tones at once attracting attention. It is an imported whistle, handsomely nickel plated, and will be found a very useful and handy pocket companion. Price, 10c.; 3 for 25c.; one dozen, 75c., sent by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

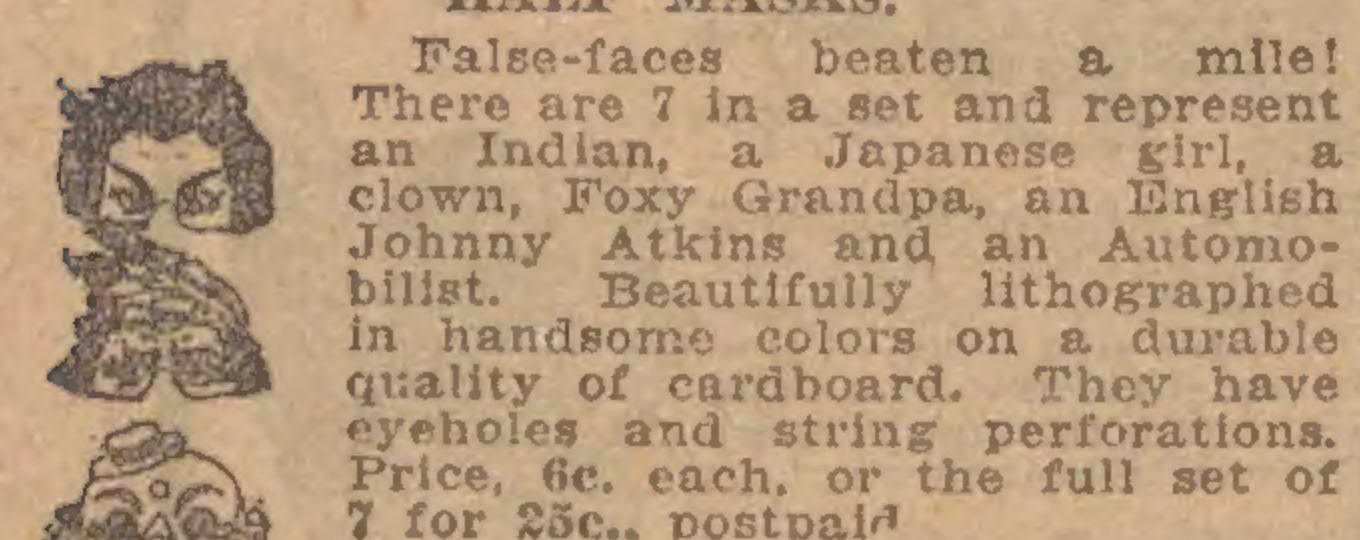
BUBBLE BLOWER.



With this device, a continuous series of bubbles can be blown. It is a wooden, cigar-shaped blower, encasing a small vial, in which there is a piece of soap. The vial is filled with water, and a peculiarly perforated cork is inserted. When you blow in to the mouthpiece, it sets up a hydraulic pressure through the cork perforations and causes bubble after bubble to come out. No need of dipping into water once the little bottle is filled. Price, 10c. each by mail, postpaid.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

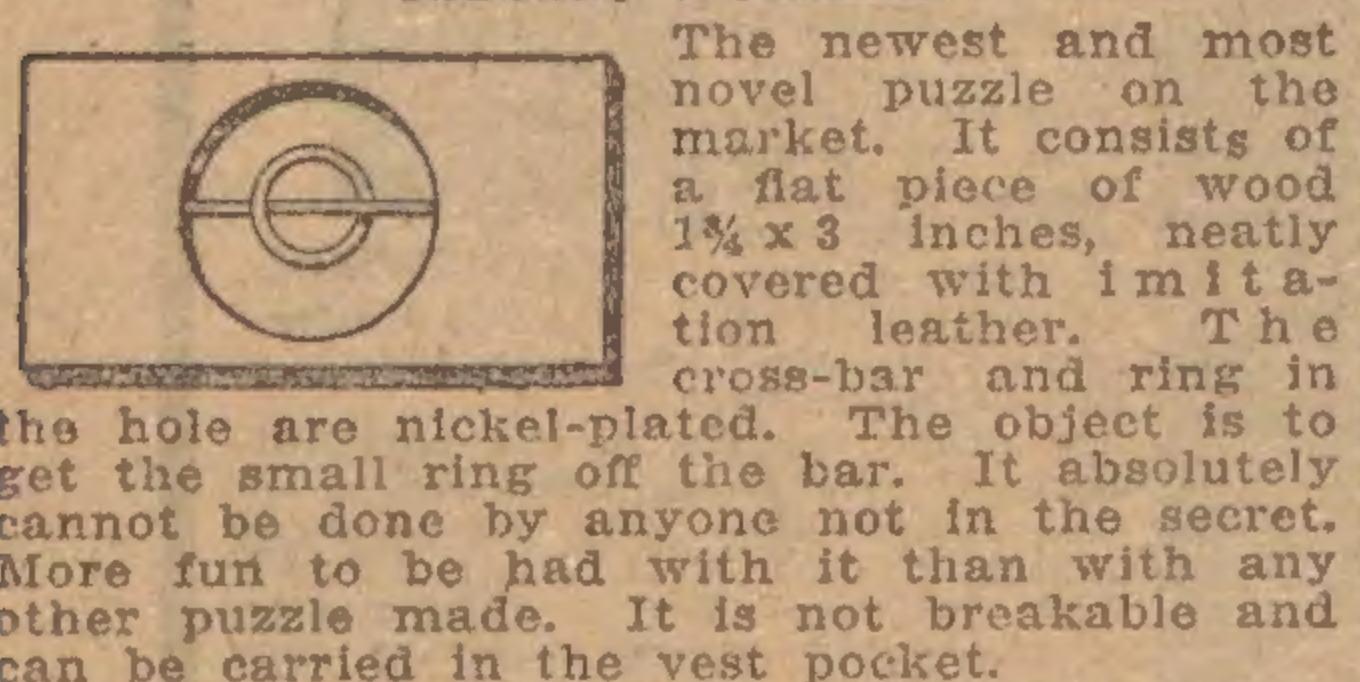
HALF MASKS.



False-faces beaten a mile! There are 7 in a set and represent an Indian, a Japanese girl, a clown, Foxy Grandpa, an English Johnny Atkins and an Automobilist. Beautifully lithographed in handsome colors on a durable quality of cardboard. They have eyeholes and string perforations. Price, 6c. each, or the full set of 7 for 25c., postpaid.

M. V. GALLIGAN,
419 W. 56th St., N. Y.

MYSTIC PUZZLE



The newest and most novel puzzle on the market. It consists of a flat piece of wood $1\frac{1}{4} \times 3$ inches, neatly covered with imitation leather. The cross-bar and ring in the hole are nickel-plated. The object is to get the small ring off the bar. It absolutely cannot be done by anyone not in the secret. More fun to be had with it than with any other puzzle made. It is not breakable and can be carried in the vest pocket.

Price 10 cents each by mail, post-paid

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

TABLE RAISING TRICK



The most mystifying trick ever done by a magician. The performer shows a plain light table. He places his hand flat upon its top. The table clings to his hand as if glued there. He may swing it in the air, but the table will not leave his hand until he sets it on the floor again. The table can be inspected to show that there are no strings or wires attached.

Price 12 cents each, by mail, post-paid

M. V. GALLIGAN, 419 W. 56th St., N. Y.

MUSICAL SEAT



The best joke out. You can have more fun than a circus, with one of these novelties. All you have to do is to place one on a chair seat (hidden under a cushion, if possible). Then tell your friend to sit down. An unearthly shriek from the little round drum will send your victim up in the air, the most puzzled and astonished mortal on earth. Don't miss getting one of these genuine laugh producers. Perfectly harmless, and never misses doing its work.

Price 20 cents each, by mail, post-paid

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

JAPANESE WATER FLOWERS



Without exception, the most beautiful and interesting things on the market. They consist of a dozen dried-up sprigs, neatly encased in handsomely decorated envelopes, just as they are imported from Japan. Place one sprig in a bowl of water, and it begins to exude various bright tints. Then it slowly opens out into various shapes of exquisite flowers. They are of all colors of the rainbow. It is very amusing to watch them take form.

Small size, price 5 cents; large size, 10 cents a package, by mail, postpaid.

M. V. GALLIGAN, 419 W. 56th St., N. Y.

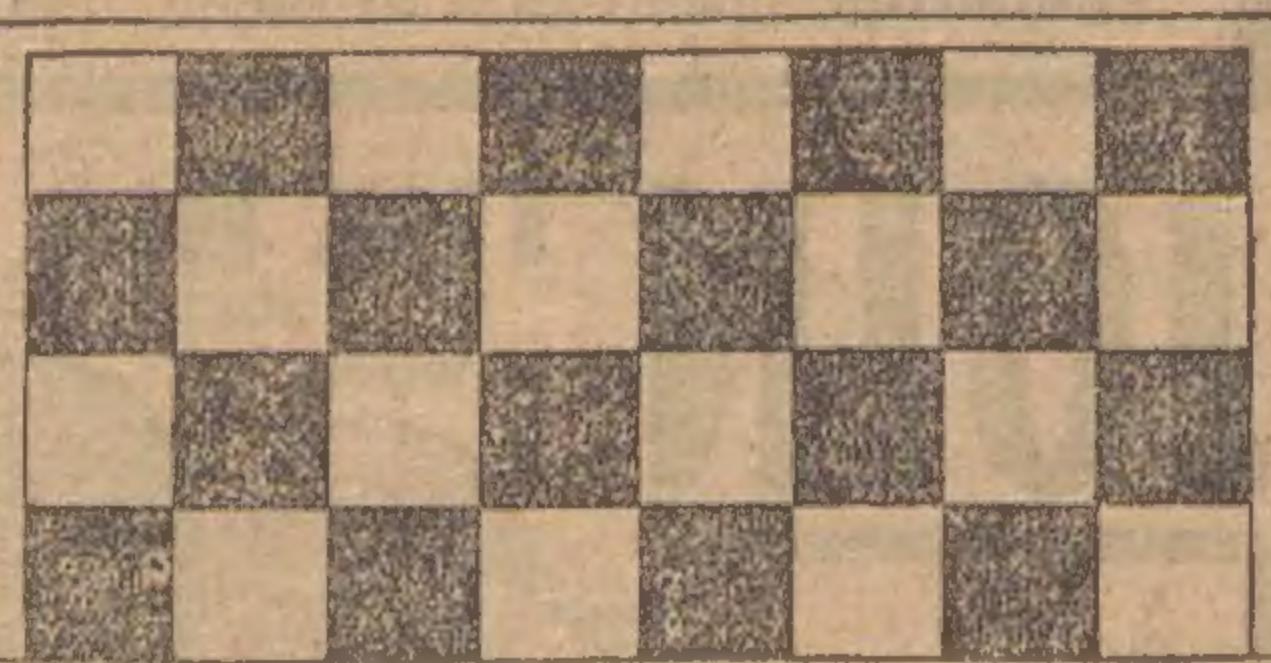


HUMANATONE.

The improved Humanatone. This flute will be found to be the most enjoyable article ever offered; nickel plated, finely polished; each put up in a box with full instruction how to use them. Price, 18c., postpaid.

WOLFF
NOVELTY CO.,
29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

LITTLE CHECKER BOARDS.



Price 7 cents each by mail. They are made of durable colored cardboard, fold to the size of $6\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and are so handy in size that they can be carried in the pocket. They contain 24 red and black checkers, and are just as serviceable as the most expensive boards made. The box and lid can be fastened together in a moment by means of patent joints in the ends. Full directions printed on each box.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

DOUBLE CLAPPERS



They are handsomely made of white wood, 6 inches long, with carefully rounded edges. On each side a steel spring is secured, with flat leaden discs at the ends. They produce a tremendous clatter, and yet they can be played even better than the most expensive bones used by minstrels. The finest article of its kind on the market. Price 7 cents, a pair, postpaid.

M. V. GALLIGAN, 419 W. 56th St., N. Y.

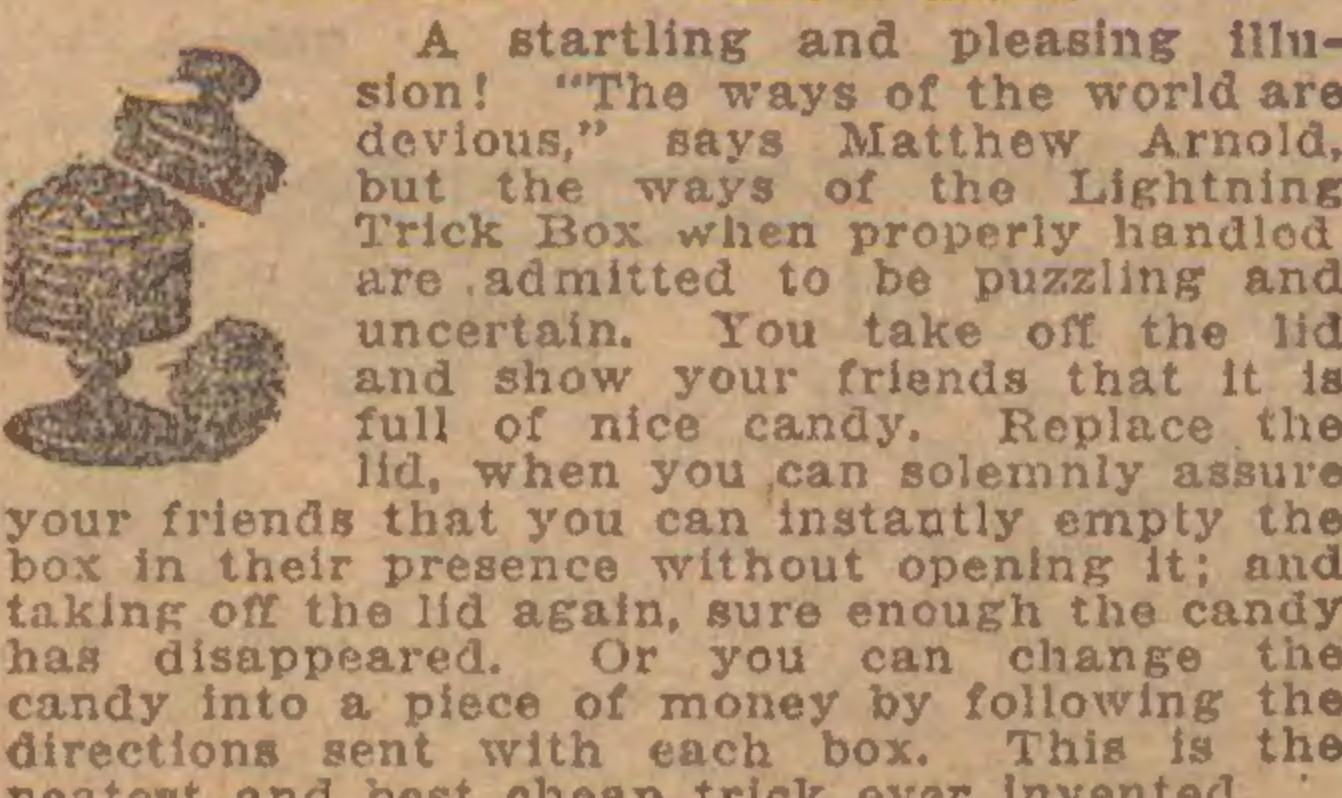
THE FLUTTER-BY.



This mechanical flying machine is worked by a new principle. It looks like a beautiful butterfly, about 9 inches wide. In action its wing movements are exactly like those of a live butterfly. It will travel through the air about 25 feet, in the most natural manner. As flying toys are all the rage, this one should be a source of profit and amusement to both old and young. Price, 18c. each by mail, postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

LIGHTNING TRICK BOX.



A startling and pleasing illusion! "The ways of the world are devious," says Matthew Arnold, but the ways of the Lightning Trick Box when properly handled are admitted to be puzzling and uncertain. You take off the lid and show your friends that it is full of nice candy. Replace the lid, when you can solemnly assure your friends that you can instantly empty the box in their presence without opening it; and taking off the lid again, sure enough the candy has disappeared. Or you can change the candy into a piece of money by following the directions sent with each box. This is the neatest and best cheap trick ever invented.

Price, only 10c.; 3 for 25c., mailed, postpaid.

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FIFFI.



Also known as a Japanese butterfly. A pleasing novelty enclosed in an envelope. When the envelope is opened Fifi will fly out through the air for several yards. Made of colored paper to represent a butterfly six inches wide.

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This cigar is made in exact imitation of a good one. It is held by a rubber cord which, with the attached safety pin, is fastened on the inside of the sleeve. When offered to a friend, as it is about to be taken, it will instantly disappear.

Price, 10c. each by mail, postpaid.
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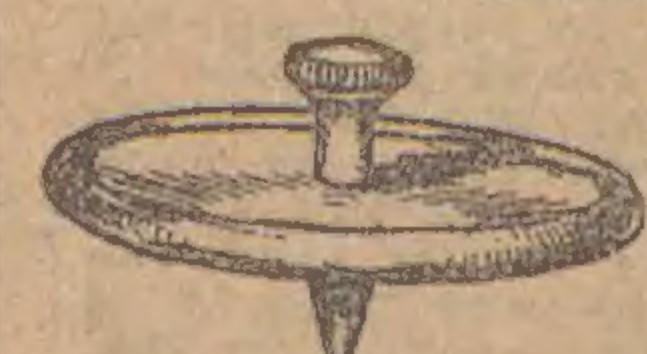
JAPANESE TWIRLER.



A wonderful imported paper novelty. By a simple manipulation of the wooden handles a number of beautiful figures can be produced. It takes on several combinations of magnificent colors. Price, 10c., postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO.,
29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

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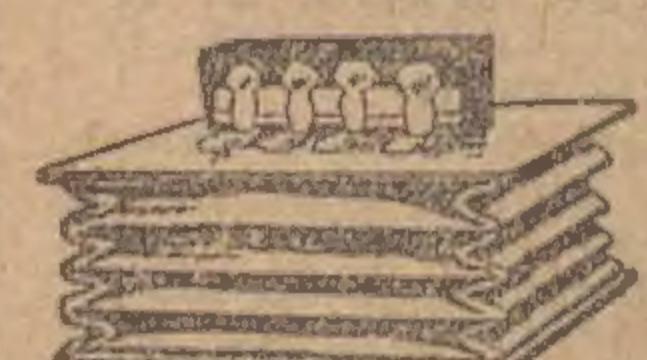


Something new for the boys. A top you can spin without a string. This is a decided novelty. It is of large size, made of brass, and has a heavy balance rim. The shank contains a powerful spring

and has an outer casing. The top of the shank has a milled edge for winding it up. When wound, you merely lift the outer casing, and the top spins at such a rapid speed that the balance rim keeps it going a long time. Without doubt the handsomest and best top on the market.

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H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

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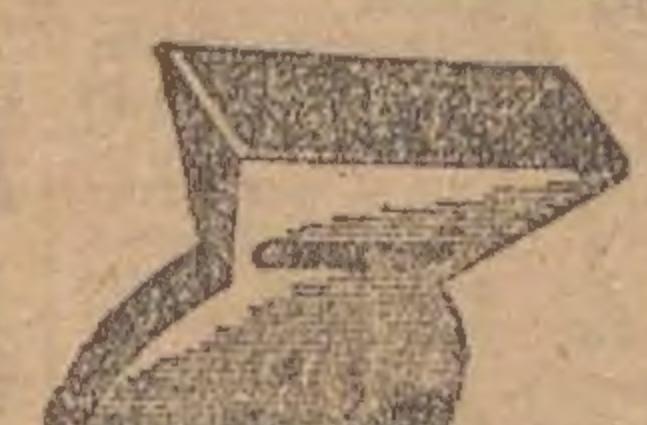


The smallest, cheapest, and best sounding musical instrument for the price. This perfect little accordéon has four keys and eight notes, a complete scale, upon which you can play almost any tune. It is

about $5 \times 2\frac{1}{4}$ inches in size, and is not a toy, but a practical and serviceable accordéon in every respect; with ordinary care it will last for years, and produces sweet music and perfect harmony. Anyone can learn to play it with very little practice.

Price 12 cents each, by mail, post-paid
WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

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A new musical instrument, producing the sweetest dulcet tones of the flute. The upper part of the instrument is placed in the mouth, the lips covering the openings in the centre. Then by blowing gently upon it you can play

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Price 8 cents, by mail, postpaid.
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Learn to swim by one trial

Price 25 cents, Postpaid

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 859 The Mystic Chart; or, The Treasure of the Big Caves.
 860 Working the Money Market; or, The Deals of a Wall Street Boy.
 861 The Boy Gold King; or, The Greatest Mine in the World.
 862 A Young Broker's Money; or, Trapping the Sharers of Wall Street.
 863 Dollars and Cents; or, From Cash Boy to Partner.
 864 Jimmy, the Office Boy; or, A Plucky Wall Street Plunger.
 865 Always on Time; or, The Perils of a Young Mail Contractor.
 866 The Missing Bonds; or, A Lucky Boy in Wall Street.
 867 Hunting for Treasure; or, The Pirate's Chest of Gold.
 868 \$10,000 Reward; or, The Fortune of a Bank Clerk.
 869 Bought at Auction; or, The Bid that Led to Riches.
 870 The Young Copper King; or, The Boy Who Went the Limit.
 871 Ralph, the Reporter, or The Mystery of Assignment No. 10.
 872 A Lucky Risk; or, The Nerve of a Wall Street Office Boy.
 873 The Race for Gold; or, After an Aztec Treasure.
 874 Tipped to Win; or, The Wall Street Messenger Who Made a Fortune.
 875 The Boy Salesman; or, Out on the Road for Success.
 876 A Young Money Broker; or, Striking Luck in Wall Street.
 877 The Way to Fame; or, The Success of a Young Dramatist.
 878 In the Money Game; or, The Luck of Two Wall Street Chums.
 879 A Golden Treasure; or, The Mystery of An Old Trunk.
 880 Hal's Business Venture; or, Making a Success of Himself.
 881 Among the Man-Eaters; or, The Secret of the Golden Ledge.
 882 The Little Wall Street Speculator; or, The Boy Who Became a Stock Broker.
- 883 Old Hazard's Errand Boy; or, The Nerve That Won the Money.
 884 Check 765; or, The Strangest Tip in Wall Street.
 885 A Short Cut to Fortune; and The Smart Boy Who Found It.
 886 Broker Brown's Boy; or, A Tough Lad from Missouri. (A Wall Street story.)
 887 The Odds Against Him; or, A Boy With Grit.
 888 A Boy With Brains; or, A Fortune From a Dime. (A story of Wall Street.)
 889 His Own Business; or, From Errand Boy to Boss.
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 891 After a Missing Million; or, The Treasure of the Wreck.
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 893 A Born Hustler; or, The Boy With the "Goods."
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 896 In Wall Street to Win; or, The Boy Who Got the Money.
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 898 Bill's Bond Syndicate; or, A Fortune From a Two-Cent Stamp. (A Wall Street Story.)
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 402 Among the "Sharks"; or, The Lights and Shadows of Wall Street.
 403 In Business for Himself; or, The Lad Who Made the Money.
 404 Charlie of the Curb; or, Beating the Money Brokers.
 405 A Million in Rubies; or, The Richest Find in the World.
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